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Be strictly careful about the life you lead; act like sensible men, not like thoughtless; make the very most of your time, for these are evil days.—Ephesians 5.15,16 (Moffatt).

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AND ACTIVITY.

In a recent statement Wilfred W. Fry, chairman of the Boys' Work Division of the International Y. M. C. A. Committee, pointed out that a feature of a year of marked results in boys' work was an increase of more than 123% in the number of boys engaged in the Christian Citizenship program. He also spoke of "increasingly helpful relations with churches and church agencies."

The results and the need sound a clear call for the increased coöperation of men of vision, consecration, experience, and Christian statesmanship in **boys' work leadership**.

Sale of the American steamer, "President Arthur," formerly the German steamer "Princess Matoika," to the **American Palestine Line, Inc.**, has been announced in the press. This vessel will form the nucleus of a service between New York and Haifa, Palestine, and is scheduled to sail on her first voyage from New York on March 12, 1925.

A strictly Kosher menu will be served on the "President Arthur," but persons desiring to vary their diet with pork can arrange to dine with the officers' mess.

The American Palestine Line, of which Justice Jacob S. Strahl, of Brooklyn, is president, is considering the purchase of additional ships.

I am sometimes asked: "Has our church no more **pioneer preachers**, who brave the hardships of the forest and the prairie?" Yes, we have in the employ of the Board 300 and more of these hardy men. I do not refer to the Sunday school missionaries, who are as many more, colporters, evangelists, preachers in the lonely

places of all the states, but to those men who follow the homesteaders in the settlement of new lands allotted by the government in Wyoming and Montana; who hike from lumber camp to loggers' shanty in the great woods, and to the preachers in the settlements far from the railway in those new sections where the indefatigable spirit of Americans is trying issues with new lands, in the effort to get a home.—Rev. Warren H. Wilson, Presbyterian Board of National Missions.

In a recent address Dr. Percy Dearmer of London traced the origin of the **Two Minutes' Silence on Armistice Day**.

He said that before the war an Anglican clergyman, who was conducting a mission in New Zealand, went to a small place where there was no church other than a Friends' meeting-house. He was so impressed by what he saw of the Quaker practice of silence that on his return to England he got together a group of people, including Dr. Dearmer, himself, and some silence meetings were held in St. Mary's, Primrose-hill. The experiment led to the production of a book, "Fruits of Silence." Shortly after, the Pan-Anglican Conference met, and all its meetings began by those present standing up for one or two minutes' silence. The practice grew. When the peace celebrations were being arranged the authorities consulted the League of Arts, which suggested that part of the observance should take the form of a few minutes' universal silence. "That suggestion," said Dr. Dearmer, "went to the highest quarters, and was at once adopted. Behind it," he added, "was the history of the Society of Friends."

An aggressive religious weekly gives a list of themes to be discussed in that paper this year by distinguished writers. The list furnishes **clues to current thought and practice**. Here are some of the themes:

Is Denominationalism Inherently Hostile to the Mind of Christ?

What is this Generation Doing to the Church?

The Religious Significance of the Revival of Poetry.

Shall the Church Banish War from its Altars?

Is Denominationalism Growing Stronger or Giving Way?

Recent Discoveries in Biology,—Do they Injure or Help Faith?

The Country Church,—is it Vanishing?

Can Evolution and Religion Meet?

Is Psychology Friend or Foe of the Spiritual Life?

Is Science Becoming Religious?

Is Industry More Christian than it was Ten Years Ago?

Modern Biblical Criticism,—has it torn the Bible to Shreds or Given us the Bible Whole?

Is Religion Dead in Europe, or is it being Reborn?

What Modern Youth Thinks of the Church.

Can the Church Win and Hold the Young People?

Is the American City Going from Christ or Coming to Him?

Is the Church Winning Back the Lost Confidence of Laboring Men?

Is the Orient Turning from or toward Christianity?

Do Christian Missions Need to be Reformed?

Does Organized Christianity Wax or Wane in England?

British and American Christianity,—How Alike, How Different?

Has Civilization Become more Christian or less, within the Past Century?

Is Christ Coming into his World,—or has He Been Shut Out?

the next year will devote itself principally to the accomplishment of the following ends: Outlawry of aggressive war, reduction of armaments, and American membership in the permanent Court of International Justice.

The many features of this program were outlined at the Ninth Annual Convention of the World Alliance held at Buffalo. The fact that this organization works along practical as well as inspirational lines was demonstrated by the adoption of definite recommendations sent to President Coolidge, Secretary of State Hughes, and leaders of the Senate and House of Representatives.

The Home Missions Council, in which are joined all but one or two of the Protestant bodies doing home mission work of all kinds, held a meeting at Atlantic City in which it was stated that marked progress has been made along two directions. One is finding out exact conditions, and the other is the manifestation of a greater willingness on the part of leaders and people in the different Christian bodies to work together.

Throughout the Northwest, all the way to the Coast, surveys have been made which have brought into conference every salaried representative. Experts have journeyed from town to town, and learned the condition as to overlapping and overlooking. On the whole it is a better record than most people imagine to be possible; there is far less overlapping and duplication than the public has been led to believe. Furthermore, the Council reports that sectarian differences have been so softened that real work is now possible.

The great problems of home missions at present are the incoming thousands of Spanish-speaking people from Mexico, and the rural and city problems, especially the city one where population has changed. Thousands of the Spaniards attend no religious instruction, and do not urge children to do so. In growing towns the question is whether to change religious work from Sundays to week days, or to follow the population to the suburbs.

RECENT CONVENTIONS.

The World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches during

The outstanding impression created by the recent Quadrennial Meeting of the Fed-

eral Council of the Churches in Atlanta, was that a new level of church coöperation has been reached. On every hand the comment was heard that the Atlanta meeting clearly revealed a deepening trust among the denominations, a clearer consciousness of common purposes, and a greater readiness for coöperative service.

The meeting, which began under the presidency of Dr. Robert E. Speer, the head of the Council during the past four years, chose as its president for the coming term Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, pastor of the Central Congregational Church of Brooklyn, N. Y. Dr. Cadman is the first active pastor to be elected to the presidency of the Council, and his selection was interpreted not only as a tribute to a great Christian leader but also as a desire to exalt the pastorate in the thinking and planning of the Council.

Underlying the whole program and all the discussions of the six-day meeting was an insistent emphasis upon the necessity for the spirit of evangelism and of personal loyalty to Christ. At noonday throughout the sessions a series of inspirational meetings on "The Call to Personal Religion" was held, which lifted the thinking of the Council above the details of organization and administration into a deeply spiritual atmosphere. Not only was it recognized that there is an urgent need for greater attention by the churches to the duty of direct evangelism, but there was also a recognition that every phase of the churches' work must be infused with the evangelistic spirit and ideal. In the words of the report of the Committee on Policy: "The greatest of all problems before the churches today is how we may present Christ more compellingly to the mind and heart of our day so that he will become the Lord of men's consciences and Master of their lives."

All Young Men's Christian Associations and their allied organizations in the United States are concerned in meetings held at Buffalo, N. Y., in December. Formal organization then took place of the new National Council of the Young Men's Christian Associations of North America. This is in accordance with provisions of a constitution formulated at Cleveland, O., in

Let Us Pray.

Graciously hear us, O Christ, for those who guard the health of the nation, that they may preserve us from sickness and disease; for those who guide the thought of the nation, that they may inspire us with worthy ideals; for those who mould the character of the nation, that they may fashion us into a noble race! Amen.

October, 1923, and later ratified by referendum vote of the Associations.

The meetings at Buffalo brought to reality improvements in organization and policy in whose planning are represented the experience and study of thousands of lay and employed officers of the various American Associations. These developments are directed to the problem of how the world's largest lay movement, while maintaining decentralization, may achieve greater unity and better meet increasing responsibilities. They center mainly upon the make-up of the general legislative body, heretofore the triennial International Convention, and upon the character and functions of what are known as the general agencies. These include the present International Committee and 44 state, interstate and territorial organizations.

Instead of the old International Committee a National Council of 345 men, with an ad interim body of 30 or 40 men, known as the General Board, will henceforth be the agent of the Associations in the United States, just as the Canadian Council is a national body. The International Convention will continue as a means of dealing with common affairs of the movement in the two countries.

An outstanding effect of the new plan, Association leaders believe, will be increased responsibility placed on laymen. The importance of this is emphasized, they point out, by the steady expansion of the movement, through its three-quarters of a century of work in this country, under the direction of men representative of many denominations and of many lines of activity. Other indicated features of the new plan are closer coördination between employed staffs of the state and national organiza-

tions, and unification of state and national budgets for review by the Associations.

OTHER LANDS.

The inhabitants of a small factory town in **Peru** took to Y. M. C. A. recreation activities with such enthusiasm that many of them refused to interrupt their play to go home for food. Their leisure pastimes used to consist mainly of drinking and gambling, but now, under the direction of a leader from the Lima Association who visits them once a week, they are discovering new pleasures in cage-ball and other games.

An effort to stamp out blasphemy by the authorities is reported from **Holland**. In the railroad stations attention is drawn by large placards exhorting the population to resist the practice of swearing and blasphemy. A translation of one poster reads:

"If you believe in an almighty God, respect him, and do not make vain, useless and unreflecting use of his name! If you do not believe in an almighty God, do not make any use of that name, for you will render yourself ridiculous and you will offend your neighbor!"

Egypt: An Old World Melting Pot.

"Any precise definition of Egyptian racial groups is impossible," says a bulletin from the Washington, D. C., headquarters of the National Geographic Society in connection with the recent Anglo-British disturbances.

"What constitutes an Egyptian is an ethnological enigma handed down from Pharaoh to Pasha," the bulletin continues. "Even the official Egyptian census-taker has divided the Egyptians, as well as he could, into natives, Syrians and Armenians, semi-sedentary Bedouins,—that hybrid between fellah and Bedouin who has one foot on the cultivated land of the Nile Valley and the other on the desert,—and nomad Bedouins, who are Bedouins pure and simple.

"There are many other foreign elements in Egypt besides the English. Alexandria, for example, is said to be as cosmopolitan today as it was 2000 years ago. Greeks were to be found there in great numbers under the Ptolemies, and today they permeate every branch of commerce. Italians are

encountered in all walks of life. More than a hundred years ago French civilization was implanted along the Nile, and French is still the most widely spoken foreign tongue.

"The Turks, who have lived in the country five or six centuries, still constitute the aristocracy of Egyptian society; but until recently, at least, they intermarried little with the Egyptians. Syrians, as money-lenders, pawn-brokers and merchants, swarm in all the towns and trading centers.

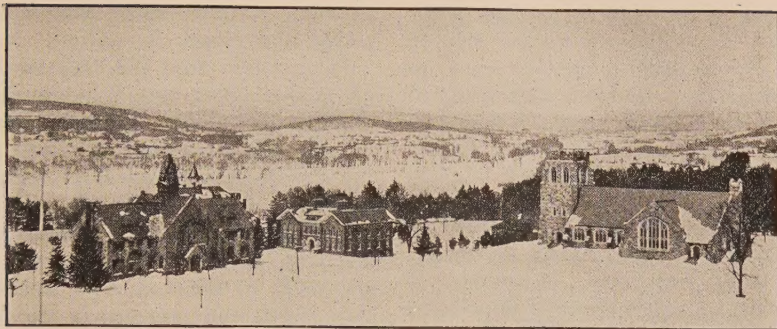
"Of the three Christian groups—Armenians, Syrians, and Copts,—the last named are by far the most numerous, nearly 700,000, according to the last census.

"Though Christian in name for 1500 years, the modern Copt has become in manners, language, and spirit a Moslem. Coptic women are almost as secluded as Moslems. Their children are generally circumcised, and the Coptic marriage and funeral ceremonies are very similar to those of the Moslems.

"In his great work, 'Modern Egyptians,' Lane sketches the Copt as a sullen, bigoted, avaricious and dissembling character. Sir John Bowring is less harsh. Although the Turks, he says, have always considered the Copts 'the pariahs of the Egyptian people, yet they are an amiable, pacific and intelligent race. They are to the counting-house and pen what the fellah is to the field and plow.' Cromer compromises by saying that the chief difference between the Copt and the Moslem is that the former is an Egyptian who worships in a Christian church and the latter is an Egyptian who worships in a Mohammedan mosque. He adds that the Copt has a more accurate habit of thought than the Moslem, and therefore makes a better bookkeeper, surveyor, or engineer. Many Copts have been educated in the American missionary schools of Egypt. The late minister of Finance, Yussuf Wahba Pasha, belonged to this group.

"The Syrian—bland, shrewd, and cosmopolitan,—is to Egypt what the international Jew is to Europe, a power in finance, a silent partner in politics.

"Though certain Armenians of distinction, like Minister Tigraine Pasha, have held high offices in Egypt, they are represented along the Nile mostly by the shop-



Connecticut River valley view from the campus of Northfield Seminary.

keeping class and are comparatively few in numbers.

"The Berbers, strung along the Nile from Aswan to the Fourth Cataract, and known also as Nubians, are different from the rest of Egypt's peoples. Though lazy and incapable, they look upon the Egyptians with contempt, and never intermarry with the fellaheen, or peasants. Many white men, moreover, will tell you the Berbers are more honest and dependable, when they do work, than are many other natives.

"The small, sandy farm of the Berber, with its meager fruit crop, is hardly enough to support him, so he and his older sons usually go to work as farm laborers for a part of the year in Lower Egypt.

"In the daily home life of the country fellaheen, the influence of Arab culture is uppermost. 'Marry what you like of women, by twos and fours,' says the Koran: so polygamy exists, but it is too expensive for the average fellah.

"Four children of every hundred in Egypt are blind in one eye, a horrified scientist estimates, simply because fatalistic parents sought no timely remedies. Infant mortality reaches 27 per cent."

PLANS TESTED AND TRIED.

The representative of the World's Sunday School Association in Sweden, Rev. K. A. Jansson, describes a program which is quite like Rally Day activities, only of far greater outreach. About ten years ago Mr. Jansson introduced a **Sunday School Agitation Week**, which is developed during the last of September or the first of October. A program for this

week is sent to all the churches and published fully in the papers in every part of Sweden. All the free churches in the largest cities and communities unite in serious efforts to make this week a success. Sermons or lectures are delivered every day that attention may be called to the importance of Sunday school work and that added interest may be stimulated.

Each fall during the past years this plan has met with decided success. In Stockholm a different church is used daily for the central meeting, and the attendance is invariably large.

The Helen Montgomery Circle of the Lake Avenue church, Rochester, N. Y., recently adopted the following program written by Pearl Thomas, the corresponding secretary:

"To be so strong that nothing can disturb our peace of mind; to talk health, happiness and prosperity to every one we meet; to make all our friends feel that there is something in them; to look on the sunny side of everything and make our optimism come true; to think only of the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only the best; to be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as we are about our own; to forget the mistakes of the past and press on to greater achievements in the future; to wear a cheerful countenance at all times, and to have a smile ready for every one; to give so much time to the improvement of ourselves that we have no time to criticize others; to be too big for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear; to think well of ourselves and to proclaim this fact to the world,—not in loud

words but in good deeds; to live in the faith that the universe is on our side so long as we are true to the best in us; to give thanks unto God for all things; to bless his holy name, to sing, pray and trust in his mercy, whether we understand our present cross or not."

Laymen's League of Pennsylvania.

An elaborate Prospectus of this newly formed league reaches us. The league has grown out of a united effort of the laymen of five churches in Roxborough, Philadelphia, during a union evangelistic effort conducted there last March by Rev. Milton S. Rees.

The program of the League proposes a large number of activities. These are classified under three heads, as follows:

(1) More religion in the home, including the returning of thanks at meals; more extensive Bible reading, memorizing of Scripture, hymns, etc.; broader reading of Christian literature; singing of sacred music by all the family at stated times; the placing of good copies of masterpieces of Christian art on the walls of the home; and a family altar in every home, with family prayers at least once a week.

(2) Closer friendly relations among members of the church, and of other churches, by infusing a spirit of courtesy, cordiality, warm hospitality, fellowship and friendship into meetings at church, or visitations.

(3) Personal and group work for the salvation of souls and the moral and spiritual redemption of the community.

The secretary of the League is Mr. David F. Keely, 618 Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia: from whom, doubtless, a copy of the Prospectus may be obtained by any interested party.

Church Publicity.

Rev. Floyd Poe, minister of the First Presbyterian Church of El Paso, Texas, relates a profitable publicity experience that may be of value to other churches. He writes:

"A great many people, especially in the cities, think of the church as a smugly complacent organization, pleased with itself and its own little crowd. They believe it to be interested only in its petty routine

of going to the service and listening to service and music.

"The church must sell itself to this host of people. And this is what the First Presbyterian Church of El Paso did. Quietly, and covering a period of a year, the church secretary took photographs of the different activities of this congregation. Committees visiting the country poor house and hospitals were photographed. A film was taken of the seamstress supported by this church and teaching at the Mexican social settlement, depicting her art to the strangers within our gates. The Mexican Sunday school, with membership of 400, was photographed. Two American missions were shown at work. A foreign missionary, also supported by this church, supplied his photograph and illustrations of his work. Boy scouts on their hikes were photographed, as were flower committees, all in action. Every department of the Sunday school, as well as every auxiliary of the church, was photographed. The total was more than one hundred splendid pictures.

"Films of these pictures were assembled by the local photographer, and he made lantern slides of them.

"Then the city was thoroughly advertised, with graphic announcements promising the revelation of a church in action. Much interest was aroused. To a great congregation these pictures were shown, with explanations of the varied activities of the church. The community registered distinct approval. Many were thoroughly 'sold' on what a modern church is doing.

"This was proved to be an easy and effective way to convince the doubter of the worth of the church as a positive agency for good in a community."

A Lord's Acre Plan to Support Churches.

Rev. H. M. Melton, pastor of Baptist churches in Arlington, Benevolence and Bluffton, Georgia, reports a second year of success with the Lord's Acre plan, begun last year, when seven members of the Bluffton church agreed to plant, till and harvest one acre of their land for God. They charged off actual cost, if any beyond their own labor, and agreed to give to God the rest whatever it might be. So marked

was the success of the first year that the season now closing saw double the acreage, and satisfactory yield.

According to Pastor Melton there are some two thousand Baptist churches in Georgia that are able to pay \$300 a year for pastor's salary, missions, light, heat and all other causes. Many more can pay even less. When the experiment began a year ago the Bluffton Church budget was \$300. This year it is to be fixed at \$1500, the change being due to the Lord's Acre plan. Under the old order \$200 of the \$300 went to the pastor. Under the new \$700 will go to the pastor, and \$800 to missions and other causes. It is found that the difficult part of the plan lies at the start. It is to get men to set apart the acre with the right motive.

Pastor Melton finds, at the end of the second year of the plan, four distinct advantages.

One is a good yield, not alone from the acre set aside for God's profit, but from all other acres tilled by the farmers, in spite of rain and pests.

Another is the effect upon members of the church who did not set aside an acre. They have attended church services more frequently, and have given more.

A third is a solution of the country church problem. It is believed that most of Georgia's churches can be saved in this way, and vast sums given to causes beyond.

The fourth advantage Pastor Melton holds to be greatest of all. That is a deepening of the spiritual life of the man who owns, plants and tills the acre, gathers the crop, and turns it into God's treasury. "You can readily see," observes the pastor, "that a change must come to a man who has in sight every day a Lord's Acre, who puts his work upon it, and who contemplates its gain, over a man who has his church in mind only one day a month, when preaching service dates come around." The pastor points out that his plan brings some men face to face with the Lord's need every day, whether they work upon the acre every day or not. The result, according to this originator of a new idea, is a better man, a better Christian, and a happier home. The pastor concludes that if the Lord's Acre plan grows it can solve a problem that has been the despair of great religious bodies in the South.

THE POWER OF THE PRINTED PAGE.

WM. H. MATTHEWS.

Today men see the power of the printed page as never before. They are startled by the tidings that three organizations, hostile to evangelical Christianity, print more religious propaganda than all the Protestant denominations combined. They feel forced to do something to counteract the influence of pamphlets teaching that "Religion is the opium of the people," which are now brought to our shores in large quantities. They are compelled to recognize the power in the silent oratory of the printed page as they see temple after temple rising to the memory of a woman, who, with all her faults and frailties, grasped the great truth that people were depending too much on preaching and too little on printing. The Protestant churches have won a few Jews to acknowledge Christ as the Messiah, while the tracts of the Christian Science cult have filled their churches with Jews, so that a prominent rabbi says, "We shall soon need Christian Science synagogues."

One society that has fully realized the power of the printed page is the American Tract Society, soon to celebrate its one hundredth anniversary. During its century of service the Society has issued publications in 178 languages and dialects. The total number of publications for this period is about a billion. Most of the new publications have been in foreign languages, as the need there has been the greatest. Thousands of hymnals in Spanish, Bohemian, Italian, Russian and Hungarian have been distributed at the mere cost of production. Missionary workers in this country and foreign lands unite in saying that foreigners can best be reached through the gospel in song.

As a part of the centennial celebration of the Society it is appropriately seeking to raise a \$100,000 Fund (\$1000 for each year of its history,) to enable it to enlarge its sphere of usefulness and publish new editions of valuable books. The Society will also seek to increase its endowment for the presentation of Bibles at the West Point Military Academy, where the Bible has

been presented to graduating classes for fifty years.

Just to the north of us in the province of Jujuy, at a railway station a brother gave a tract which was carried away to the mountains, and to my knowledge over fifty people were saved through it, and the work is still spreading. Here in Salta one of our steadiest and brightest believers was converted through reading a tract which had been put under his door while he was at work. Another brother, who went home to be with the Lord last year, was led into the light through reading a tract which I put through his window. Yet another brother now in fellowship with us here was led into the light through reading "Safety, Certainty and Enjoyment," and yet still another brother was led into liberty last year, through the same booklet. In Jujuy a whole family was saved through reading a Gospel of Luke. From all this it is easily seen that the Lord blesses the literature which we give away, and while the enemy sows the vilest of seed in great quantities, we are thankful that we are able to continue sowing the good seed.—W. A. Tremlett, Argentina, S. A.

Ralph D. Smith, secretary of the Bible House of Los Angeles, reports advance in its work the past year. The English edition of **"Selected Portions from the Word of God"** brought requests to print it in Arabic, French, Burmese, Japanese, Guarani, etc. "Several urgent requests came concerning a possible Arabic edition, and for a number of months we made it a subject of prayer. A few weeks ago we were able to write to the Nile Mission Press in Cairo and place the order for 10,000 copies of this precious book in Arabic. Is it not good of the Lord to thus add Mohammedan lands to our parish? It may interest you to know that a Christian widow, poor in this world's goods, is paying for the Arabic edition,—the Portuguese edition was first launched and twice printed by a wealthy widow, now with the Lord."

Through a special gift received last summer an order was placed in Germany for printing 10,000 "Selected Portions" in German.

"Whether it is the Lord's will that this

wonderful book should be printed in other languages, we do not know, but we are waiting upon him, and if some of our friends feel it laid upon their hearts to undertake one or more languages—we shall be glad to hear from them. Doubtless many who read this circular could personally finance one or more editions, and what a joy it would be to know that, quite alone, one had placed 10,000 or 25,000 'Selected Portions from the Word of God' in the foreign fields. Two editions have been issued in Italian, but these are now exhausted, and a new edition is needed for the more than 2,000,000 Italians in South America. There is also considerable demand for this book in French.

"One of our friends is deeply interested in circulating the Gospel of John. She has undertaken to place a copy in as many homes as possible in Central America. Many of these books have already been dispatched to the Missionaries. Please pray for these special distributions!"

IN DEFENCE OF THE ELDERLY.

It is significant that the elderly should require defence. Emphasis is, however, laid so ceaselessly upon the claims of youth that the elderly are in danger of suffering neglect. Much might, indeed, be said against accentuating the distinction at all. Very heaven is it to be young, but the earth does not belong exclusively to youth, and the elderly are not here on sufferance: they belong the one to the other. It is not in the higher interests of the young that their special interests be unduly emphasized.

No one doubts for one moment the urgent necessity that exists for placing work amongst children and adolescents in a primary place. The church must needs keep pace with all educational advance, and steadily supplement the intellectual equipment of youth by training it in spiritual idealism right up to the threshold of its engagement in the world's work. The present generation that fills our schools and colleges has a right to the best we can afford, for the signs multiply to show that the questions, national and international, that lie ahead will tax the resources of our nationhood to its utmost. Ours, therefore,



Lumbermen in the Northern woods. They can be evangelized by the printed page.

to see to it that our young people move forward girt and shod with efficiency.

Wisdom warns us, however, against overdoing the emphasis, as is not infrequently done. Youth's resentment against authority and ill-concealed impatience with the councils of "old fogies" are to be deplored. The last thing we can afford to do is to sacrifice the weight of the elderly in the work of the church: their ministry there and in the general service of life is valuable beyond measure.

The very means by which the enterprize of the church at home and abroad is maintained, come obviously from many who no longer are competent for personal service, and are glad to further the undertakings of those who are. Often the heroic service of well-equipped young men and women in the mission field is matched at home by many of obscure and limited opportunity from which all chance of the thrill of adventure has finally passed. The two classes are partners in one great cause. A congregation whose average age is 24 will doubtless hum with activities for young people, and it is in a happy case; but the full story of its life will certainly include the helpfulness of men and women who have moved well beyond that morning hour, yet without whose generous aid much done could not even be attempted. This holds equally on the broader field of the church as a whole.

But we suggest that the spiritual ministry of the elderly is of greater value still. Is it too much to say that one of the deep

differences between the young and the elderly is that while the former incline to worship at the shrine of brains, the latter prefer to do honor to character? Out of an observant and reflective experience grows the tendency to lay the stress less upon cleverness and more upon goodness as the mainstay of life and work. Gifts alone so easily miscarry, or for different reasons fail of their full opportunity, but the doors are never closed to the penetrative power of character. That body, therefore, which in the community is throwing its weight into the right scale helps to sustain its moral and spiritual health: herein do we "make the soul" of the nation. Where there is no vision the people perish.

We venture further to suggest that it is a shallow fallacy to insist upon youth as the saving salt of fresh adventure. Granted all its enthusiasm and idealism, what of those who have seen so clearly, so deeply into the ways of God that to their eyes life is always alive with the chance of seeing more? There are many elderly souls to whom God's world is a palace of wonder; their heart is like the lark in its "privacy of glorious light." When experience is nothing less than a procession of the outgoings of God, filling them with amazement, anticipation is strong upon their spirit, and they are ready to step out in eager expectation of something greater yet. Such youth at 65 makes life a joy. It was certainly a radiant soul that first sang the "Nunc dimittis." Not one note in it of a querulous old age or of peevish disregard

of present days as compared with those that were.

When life is no desert, but a treasure-house of God, you strike a stream of living water twisting its way amongst men. Optimism, not cynicism, is the gift of the elderly, who have seen God's hand through a lifetime, and insist, "All is for the best!"

We cannot do without this ministry of the elderly. Their spiritual vision keeps the heart young and glad.—"Record" of the United Free Church of Scotland.

THE EFFICIENT CHRISTIAN.

Can a Christian be standardized? Efficiency experts claim that only one man in ten thousand is 90 per cent efficient, that so called successful men are seldom above 60 per cent efficient, and that the great mass of men never get above 25 per cent in efficiency. Statistics prove that nine out of every ten applicants for jobs and positions fail if they are unskilled workmen, but if trained, seven out of ten succeed. Only one per cent of men succeed by dint of their own unaided powers without special training. These figures are based upon scientific tests made on a large enough scale to permit of generalization without destroying the value of the results.

What shall be the standard of measurement for an efficient Christian? The word "efficient" carries with it the idea of effectiveness, competence, ability. The efficient Christian, assuming that his character and spirit are truly Christian, is the man who brings worthy things to pass, who gets results, who succeeds in Christian work. That in general describes the efficient Christian. There are many varieties of Christian work, personal, ecclesiastical, social, political, and all of them are necessary and commendable; but the touchstone of real efficiency for a Christian is his ability to make genuine converts to Jesus Christ. And the making of converts should be taken in the broad sense which includes the conversion and spiritual nurture of boys and girls, the regeneration and Christian culture of mature men and women, and the bringing to normalcy of those in the church who are still in the kindergarten when they ought to be in the university. It is taken for granted that

much Christian service of a supplementary and purely physical character will have to be rendered in order to make this more spiritual service successful. All that goes into the material up-keep of the church and all that contributes to wholesome environment is just as truly Christian work; but the final test of all is conversions to Jesus Christ in the broad sense of the word.

The final test of the efficiency of a business institution is the number of new customers secured and the number of old customers retained and developed. All other departments of the business hang upon the sales department.

The application of this logic to the church is too obvious to require elaboration. The early New Testament churches were highly efficient so long as they continued to express the spirit and method of Jesus in seeking the salvation of men and women. But later, when the church became argumentative over the fine points involved in the philosophies of the religious life, it lost its evangelistic and missionary efficiency, and for hundreds of years was a spiritually bankrupt institution. The efficiency of the church has never been measured by its ability to draft creeds, to analyze philosophies, to build cathedrals, to conserve organizations, to embellish rituals, but on the contrary the church has always been gauged and must always be tested by evangelistic zeal and missionary passion expressed in intelligent service inspired by the spirit and truth of the gospel. In other words, efficiency must have a soul. There is still much soulless efficiency in the business world, but the business world is slowly coming to see that commerce and industry and politics must be carried on with due regard to spiritual principles. There can be no Christian efficiency without spirituality, and when we say spirituality we mean that fine appreciation of unseen and eternal realities which expresses itself in love. The soul of love is the love of souls.

How do we stand in the light reflected from this high plane? How efficient are we on the basis of this test? Where does the Master rate us? He waits to energize us by his Spirit for larger efficiency. For this very thing all power has been given

unto him. Efficiency is promised on the basis of effort. The going, the discipling, the teaching is ours, the energizing of those who go is his. Therefore the final and supreme test of Christian efficiency and church efficiency is the effectiveness with which an individual or an institution bearing the name of Christ brings under the banner of the Captain of our salvation new recruits who need no conscription.—“The Baptist.”

CURRENT THOUGHT.

The Bible is not like any other book, and cannot be taught like any other book. It must be taught with reverence. You cannot get anything out of a human being until you trust him, and you cannot appropriate the truths of this Book unless you have confidence in it. A man vague in his faith can do a lot of harm,—he is no teacher of the Bible.—Dr. Howard A. Kelly.

The impression that the average churchgoer gets is that the modern preacher does not know the Bible, or else that he does not believe in it. He seldom quotes it. No man can preach the gospel as it ought to be preached unless he has much of the Bible practically by heart. To such it will be an **unfailing inspiration**.—Elliott C. McDougal.

The president in his admirable Thanksgiving Proclamation exhorted our citizens to assemble for worship in the churches and to gather at the **family altar**. The family altar! Alas, that the great mass of Americans would require to have some one interpret for them the president's meaning! Presidents like Wilson and Cleveland, merchant princes, ministers in

the pulpit, heads of colleges, men of strength and leadership, refer with gratitude to the family altar and the recognition of God in the home. Now that creative and regulative force and agency is all but perished from the nation.

What is taking the place of the family altar? Is it the family radio, or the family motor, or the family dinner party, or the elaborately carved set of mah jong?—Dr. Clarence E. Macartney.

Why Not Try Preaching?

This generation of rollicking, dancing, card-playing, theater-going, God-forgetting, Christ-rejecting sinners needs to hear some earnest preaching, preaching that deals with sin and the punishment that sin will inevitably bring. It does not need to be abused, but it does need faithful, earnest, fearless preaching on God and his attributes, his creation of the world and his rights in it. His creation of man, his love for him, and his right to rule over and guide him, ought to be faithfully urged upon this generation. There is great need for preachers who have no desire for ecclesiastical office, for the applause of men, for the wealth of the world, for ease of body, for an escape from the reproach of the cross, but whose universe is filled with the presence of the infinitely holy God, who walk in awe of him, and worship him in the beauty of holiness. We need preachers who will insist that Jesus Christ is able to save from all sin, that his kingdom is spiritual, and that the Holy Ghost should dwell in his people. In a word, we are in need of gospel preachers who will do their whole duty, believing the Bible revelation of the immortality of man, the sinfulness of sin and its fearful consequences, regardless of whatever ostracism or persecution it may bring, “enduring as seeing him who is invisible.”—H. C. Morrison.

NORTHFIELD SUMMER CONFERENCES, 1925.

Young Women's Conference,	June	24 to July	2
Woman's Interdenominational Home Mission Conference,	July	6 to July	14
Conference for Women's Foreign Missionary Societies,	July	14 to July	22
Conference of Religious Education,	July	23 to August	1
General Conference of Christian Workers,	August	1 to August	17
Massachusetts Christian Endeavor Institute,	August	17 to August	24

THE MISSION FIELD: AT HOME AND ABROAD.

The missionary who opened the door into Japan, by birth a Hungarian Jew, by naturalization a British subject, by marriage the husband of an English wife, by profession a physician, and by conversion a believer in Jesus Christ, Bernard Jean Bettelheim, was a layman sent out by a group of laymen, pious British naval officers, to take up his residence in the **Loo Choo Islands** in 1846. "Perched on a curious overhanging rock" in the temple called "The Protecting Temple," he lived for seven years, then welcomed Commodore M. C. Perry and the officers of his expedition, and was happy to act as interpreter and medical officer as well.

This Christian Jew, who was master of thirteen different languages, found Loo Choo, as did the Commodore, to be the doorway into Japan. The light which this early pioneer set burning there has been burning constantly ever since, but at times very dimly.

These are the days when efficiency in the business world is a passport to success. The young men who are enrolled in the Commercial Department of the **Hunter Corbett School in Chefoo, China**, especially those who make Accountancy their major study, are taking important positions in business firms and institutions where high grade efficiency and a thorough knowledge are required.

The same is true for stenography. For example, the stenographic department of the Singer Sewing Machine Company in Seoul, Korea, is now under the charge of one of our students who graduated a little over a year ago; while most of the work in that department is done by some of our other students. This indicates that our school is working along the right line in developing a high class commercial department.

As more and more of our strong Christian young men take their place in the business world, we are confident that the cause of the kingdom will equally progress with the influential and leading classes in North China.—Annual Report.

At a conference on missionary work in **Tropical Africa**, more especially in

connection with education, held last September, and attended by representatives from a large number of societies, not only British but also American, French, Belgian, Swiss, Swedish and German, and also by government representatives, the problem of education was discussed in all its bearings.

It was demonstrated that whatever might be the practice in European countries, it was imperative that the education of the African peoples should be retained, as far as possible, in the hands of the missionaries, who have heretofore been responsible for it, as a rule. Governments could not give education with a religious basis, and the conference affirmed that without religion education would be a ghastly failure. It was urged that the missionary societies should endeavor to meet the strong and increasing demand by the Africans for education by supplying it not merely in book form, but in every subject that touches the life of the people, and with Christian teaching permeating it in every part, so that religion might enter into the whole of their lives.

A report letter from Rev. John X. Miller, of **Pasumalai, India**, reveals what an exceedingly busy man he is.

The head of a group of four flourishing schools for boys and young men (High School, Teachers' College, Model School, Trade School), enrolling over 1000 pupils, he conducts also an experiment farm of 45 acres, is supervising the erection of a new building for the college, having secured \$50,000 for the purpose, installing electric lighting and running water for the station, has just erected a new bungalow and conducted a sale yielding 500 rupees, has recently completed an amphitheater on a hillside for outdoor exercises, is organizing his alumni to raise \$10,000 for a memorial to his wife, sends out stately fifteen bands of students on evangelistic tours through the villages, corresponds with the American Board and with a multitude of friends in America, and, as if this were not enough, serves on a government commission which is transforming the system of education in South India, and acts as chief examiner for the high schools of the Madras Presidency, entailing the supervision of 32 assistants and the passing upon 14,000 examination papers, this last being his summer

diversion when he escapes to the Kodai Kanal hills above the burning plains of the Madura district.

He reports that many of his students are turning to Christ, and that "India is ready to accept Christ, though as yet she fights shy of Christianity and the church."

Presbyterian Church of Central Africa.

Last September an important step was taken in Nyasaland through the union of three Presbyterian mission churches which have been working in that land for the last 40 or 50 years. In connection with the Livingstonia Mission there is a large presbytery consisting of native converts with European and native ministers, a result of the work of the United Free Church of Scotland. The head of this mission is Dr. Robert Laws, who has worked there for 50 years. To the south of Lake Nyasa lies the large Blantyre Mission carried on by the Established Church of Scotland, with Dr. A. Hetherwick as superintendent. The presbyteries of these two missions have united to form the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Central Africa. In October the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa agreed that the presbytery of Mkhoma, which lies to the west of Lake Nyasa and consists of 12 congregations containing 10,000 members, should also join the above mentioned synod. As a consequence, the three large Presbyterian missions are building up a great church in Nyasaland, which will offer a united front against the various sects (Russellism, Seventh Day Adventism, etc.) which are being introduced into the country from the gold fields at Johannesburg.

A constitution has been drawn up for the synod in which a conservative position is taken up with regard to doctrinal matters.

MEANS AND METHODS HERE AND THERE.

Our Bible women avail themselves of every opportunity of entering the factory doors to preach the gospel and to get acquainted with the women and girls. The noon hour is the time of great opportunities, when the workers crowd around the Bible women to hear the message.

There are 40 factories in the city. Our Bible women visit 28 of them, so that more

than one half allow religious instruction to be given to their employees.

Throughout the year 19 women do evangelistic work in these factories. From 15 to 30 minutes daily is allowed in each factory, and we rejoice to report hearty co-operation on the part of the proprietors. Many have consented to ring a bell upon the arrival of the Bible woman, so that the hair net work is laid aside, and the preaching and teaching begun. The factory hymnal is constantly used. The women and girls love to sing these gospel hymns: many have been committed to memory. Numbers of colored pictures and posters have been used, as well as catechisms, "Travellers' Guide," and other religious literature, all of which has aroused interest in the gospel.

Sunday services are held for factory women. The morning service in the McMullan Church, East side of the city, has reached the high water mark of 300. It is estimated that during each week more than 5000 women and girls have had an opportunity of hearing the gospel. Between 50 and 60 have professed Christ, 40 of whom have made public confession, and have been baptized and become members of the different churches of the city. During the year at different intervals stereopticon slides are shown, which are much appreciated.—Christina J. Brashkamp, Shantung, China.

Social Reform Movement.

Last spring the Nanking Church Council, composed of Chinese and foreign representatives of all denominations working in the city, started a movement to organize a Social Reform Society. They prepared a prospectus, and gave copies to about 75 of the leading officials and citizens who gave their signatures of approval. A dinner was given at which subscriptions were taken. The military governor gave \$1000, the civil governor gave \$500, and others small amounts totaling about \$500. Then a large meeting was called to organize the society and elect officers.

This meeting was held in the city's public lecture hall, and was well attended. The purpose of the society is twofold: to reform ten present evils, and to suggest an equal number of civic improvements.

Evils to be reformed:

Opium.	Cigarettes.
Gambling.	Immorality.
Concubinage.	Extravagance.
Immoral literature.	Idoltrous practices.
Foot-binding.	Strong drink.

Civic improvements:

Public hygiene. Public playgrounds.
 Short course schools.
 A newspaper published in characters studied in the above schools.
 Home for cripples. A museum.
 Amusements and lectures.
 A society for prevention of cruelty to criminals.
 Industrial training for beggars.
 Relieving calamities society.

A headquarters has been rented, and a secretary employed. Literature is being prepared, and public lectures are being given. Other cities are taking up the idea. The civil governor has given permission for preaching the gospel not only to prisoners in Nanking prisons, but also in the Lih Shiu and Gao Shuen prisons.

Touring in the American Baptist Telugu Mission, India.

The results of touring work in this mission, measured by the ingathering of 1923, were among the most blessed since the great mass movement of 1878.

Mr. Davis writes concerning the Allur field: "In February we were camping at a government rest house. (These rest houses are maintained on the government roads for the convenience of travelers, at a moderate charge.) On that day we traveled five miles to Vidavalur, had a baptismal service, after which we held a service for the building of Christian character, a most delightful time. We came back to camp in the evening of the same day, went to another village eight miles away in another direction, had another baptismal service and another special service for the Christians. On the same day two of my helpers with the pastor of a nearby church had another service where testimony was given by the ordinance of baptism. This was a full day. The next day we went in our car to another village in another direction about ten miles, and here again the baptismal waters were stirred and the small group of Christians built up in the faith.

On the following day we went west for a distance of five miles to a place called Waddipalem, and in the midst of a crowd of heathen ten were baptized, after which we spent an hour preaching to the listening heathen.

"The following day we went to a village near this last one, and baptized and held the usual service. Next we went to a village five miles away, and had the greatest baptismal service of our whole thirty-one years in India. The day following we went again to the village of Sojulu about eight miles away, and held another baptismal service, organized a church there, conducted the Lord's Supper, and with this ended a week of strenuous though glorious work. During the week we held seven baptismal services, baptizing 87 people from fifteen different villages, organized one church, and ministered to the soul needs of many people. This is the greatest work this side of heaven!"

Mr. Brock, from the Kanigiri field, writes: "It would be interesting to give a daily record of each day for the two months. We changed camp about every two days, going to the villages where the people called us. In this two months we baptized just over 600 persons, all of whom gladly received the message. These were the most joyful days of thirty years of preaching! Year after year we have gone to that section of the field, and only one here and there believed. Now they came like a flood. We did not have to go to them,—they came to us. There was much joy and determination among the people, such as I have never seen before. Village after village, where there was not a single Christian before, came boldly asking for baptism. Thirty years of sowing, and now the reaping! Of course all of us rejoiced in this harvest of souls."

Mrs. F. E. Boggs spends practically all her time on the great Narsaravupet field, out in camp. She says: "The village work is always full of interest and of the supreme joy of evangelism, the telling over and over the old, old story of Jesus and his love to multitudes who never heard it before. Some days we tell it many times, and crowds of people listen and acknowledge the truth with its powerful appeal, and they seem to believe our personal testimony to



I inclose picture of a church and day school I have just dedicated. The school building is in the background. Total cost of this plant, 6000 yen contributed by an American and 1500 yen balance by Koreans. Congregation, 320. Boys and girls in day school, 170, all in Sunday school too. Church self-supporting, Pyengyang District, Methodist Episcopal church.

I have dedicated six plants like the above in the past two months. They pay all local expenses and pastor's salary, and support school work, with perhaps a gift of \$50 to \$100 a year for the school or kindergarten. But gifts of \$100 to \$1000 are needed for the plants.—Rev. John Z. Moore.

what the Lord has done for us, and yet how few among them have courage to break caste and be baptized! Oh for an awakening throughout the land, nay, throughout the whole needy world, a revival in which God will restore to his people everywhere the joy of his salvation, and bring into his fold these myriads who are hearing of him and are being drawn ever nearer to the uplifted Christ!"

Chinese Bandits' Children Attend Bible Schools.

That the Chinese bandit will some day be called to account by his own children is the belief of Dr. Floyd W. Tomkins, rector of Holy Trinity Church, Philadelphia. Dr. Tomkins' assertion is founded on his knowledge of conditions in China through the World Association of Daily Vacation Bible Schools, of which he is president. In announcing the annual meeting of this Association, held in Washington, D. C., he reported that over 100,000 illiterate boys and girls enrolled at these schools in China, 40% of them being from bandit homes. These little Orientals not only crowd the

schools, but have shown their gratitude by contributing the equivalent of \$175, United States money, that children in their own and other lands may share their privileges. This unselfish offering so touched the heart of a New York business man that he sent in his check to duplicate the gift.

The work of the Association has a firm foothold in China, as evidenced by the fact that the natives themselves have paid half the cost and 6460 Chinese students have volunteered as teachers. There are now 2072 such schools in China, held in mission chapels, mission schools and even in Buddhist and Confucian temples. The reports of the Association show that among 60,000,000 Chinese children the Vacation Bible Schools have done much to reduce illiteracy and improve social conditions.

Korea and Mexico are other countries where this work has become established. Children of both these nationalities bring their "pennies" to further the growth of the movement. The Korean schools in their second year numbered 100, taught by 790 student teachers and enrolling 11,000 children.

The 1000 boys and girls who attend the 26 schools in Mexico have already contributed 1750 centavos, or \$17.50. A spirit of international friendship is fostered among them, as shown by the contribution of \$10.48 sent by Chinese youngsters to Amoy to extend the activities in Mexico. For this the Mexican children expressed their appreciation by sending in turn a small contribution to China.

While the directors of this movement feel that the greatest need for growth is in foreign countries where tremendous illiteracy exists, the continuous spread of the Vacation Bible Schools in America and Canada shows their importance here as well. The first experiment was made in 1901 in New York by Rev. Robert G. Boville, who recognized the necessity of community welfare work among the idle East Side children during the summer months. Like their foreign brothers and sisters, American children have contributed their coppers to this cause, sending 250,000 pennies during 1924 to the New York headquarters at 156 Fifth Avenue. The New York vacation schools were successful from the start, and the organization grew from local to national in scope, and gradually became international, its founder becoming the international director. The World Association has a branch in France, and has successfully launched its first schools in Bulgaria and Liberia.

The annual meeting this year discussed the provision for 4000 schools in China, and extension in Korea, Japan, India, the Philippines, Mexico and Europe.

The report for 1924 of the Ichowfu (China) mission station has a paragraph on their Daily Vacation Bible Schools which will be appropriate here:

"The D. V. B. S. are a connecting link between our evangelistic and educational work. In 1922 they made their debut, having 15 schools. In 1923 we outran our goal, with 56 schools, 173 teachers, and 1390 pupils. They were mixed schools, 44 of them being in the country. Final examinations and hand work exhibits showed that excellent work had been done. A special committee gave rewards in all branches. Some schools learned ten songs in their six weeks. In some places where buildings

could not be secured, temporary matsheds were erected, and in them some of the best work was done. The teachers' training class with a group of children was a weekly event of great value. Every two weeks a social was given for the teachers, who were all volunteer workers. Our young men, home from college, were a great help. The Ichowfu parade with 400 children was a big success. They sang their patriotic and sacred songs. The remark was heard, 'If all the children of China were trained in this type of school there would be no bandits to contend with.' Supervised play as well as work, teaching fair play and sportsmanship, was urged on all. The children learned to tell 12 Bible stories, and others were told them. Surely Jesus was pleased with this work among the little ones! It seemed one of the biggest things of the year, and brought the non-Christian officials of our city into sympathy with the work in a substantial way, many coming to the closing exercises, men who seldom see us at other times. Our goal for the summer of 1924 is 100 schools, 200 teachers, and 2000 pupils.

"The Sunday School," continues this report, "vital as it is because of lasting throughout the year, cannot make the same showing as the Daily Vacation Bible School, but without the work done through them the D. V. B. S. could not have been so successful. There were 8 mission schools conducted on sabbath afternoons, largely by students from our schools. The attendance has been irregular, averaging 20 to 50, but the seed is sown on the waters, to be found after many days."

THE AFRICAN AND HIS HYMNS.

From inquiries I have made, says a missionary in Central Africa, I believe village life is much more pure and morally clean than it used to be. Throughout our district the people are fond of hymn-singing, so in their work and play, and when they are resting, a great amount of singing is going on, so that all the people, whether they like it or not, hear something of the way of life in the hymns they are obliged to hear. The people often take a liking for a certain hymn, which they will sing at all times and in all places, it may be for several weeks, and then they will choose another. On one

occasion the favorite was "Work, for the night is coming." When that was being sung at nine or ten at night one wondered when the night would begin!

It is sabbath evening. The services are over, the darkness has fallen, the long day closes. The missionary sits on the verandah after the torrid heat, enjoying the cool of the African night, when the sound of singing is borne to his ears. Lanterns gleam through the trees, and a body of young people pass by on their way to the township. It is the church choir, which, with the elders as their leaders, go out every Sunday night to sing hymns and preach the gospel in the streets of the neighboring villages.

He recalls how twelve years ago, when first he came to this district, the grownup people held aloof from him in the towns, and the children stood far-off, timid and afraid at the sight of a white man. Coaxing some of the little ones near to him, he taught them the simple words and tune of "Bia ma Jesus ubua" ("Come to Jesus just now"), while their seniors sat at a distance, making game of the white man and his foolish ways. Then he unrolled a picture of Jesus and told the tiny tots of the Good Master who loved little children.

And now? Now there go some of these same people singing, "Sinners, Jesus will receive," "Mighty to Save," "Lead, kindly Light," and other hymns that celebrate the Great Redemption. This singing is priceless. It is carrying the gospel into the hearts of the people.—J. M., in the "Record."

A JUNGLE SUNDAY SCHOOL IN BURMA.

Ever since I had arrived in Burma and taken up my work in the city of Rangoon I had heard constantly about the interesting work being done in the jungle, and especially of the Sunday schools held there. One Sunday afternoon I at last had the privilege of going with the missionary's wife and the two Bible women to a Burmese village for just such a meeting.

We walked single file along the narrow, rough path that is the main street of the village. As soon as our group came in view, the children began to gather, for they knew the workers. Under a big cocoa-palm tree in the center of the village we paused,

and in a twinkling around our feet, sitting in the thick dust that is everywhere during the dry season, gathered the Burmese kiddies. Sisters came with naked babies on their hips, their faces so dirty, their noses so perpetually runny, their little bodies covered with sores over which the flies hovered, until I was sick at the sight.

As soon as a small group had assembled the Bible women started a song previously taught, and as they sung we could see between the narrow aisles of the trees other children coming on a trot, wrapping their longyies or skirts about them as they ran. New songs were taught, Scripture verses, too. Then a Bible story was told, to which even the babies listened, while always the voices were interrupted by the eternal cawing of some of Burma's millions of crows.

In the midst of the Bible story a creaking, grumbling ox cart came winding its way between the trees, to halt in our very midst with much shouting on the part of the driver. The story-teller went bravely on while the occupants of the cart unpacked their belongings and carried them into a nearby house. In the meantime some of the mothers had drawn near to listen, and even a few wild-looking jungle men had joined the crowd that were standing on the outskirts. Who of us can say what seeds were being sown in the indifferent, hardened hearts of these people, so held under the thralldom of Buddhism!

All was going well despite these small interruptions, the story was almost finished, when suddenly shouts were heard from one of the sidepaths. Something was shouted in Burmese, and in the twinkling of an eye the Sunday school had melted away like leaves before an autumn gale. We were a bit dazed by it all, until we learned that the cause of the sudden flight was the appearance in the sky of one of the aeroplanes used by the forestry department of the government. To the few children who remained were given the coveted American postal cards, and then once again we made our way out of the maze of jungle paths, while the populace came out to gaze at us as we passed along.

What a far cry it is from the beautiful rooms in which most of our Sunday schools meet in America to this crude school with its half-naked girls and boys, squatting be-

neath the open sky! But the songs are the same in spirit, though not in tongue; the old, old story that is ever new is told to eager-eyed little folks, and there too is the abiding sense of the presence of the heavenly Father who covets these Burmese children for his kingdom.—E. J. S. in "Burma Mission Herald."

AT THE END OF THE TRAIL.

MISS FRANCES L. GARSIDE.

A secretary for the Young Women's Christian Association in China uses modes of travel both ancient and modern, that being a country where the ancient and modern parallel. Miss Cynthia Scribner, a field student secretary in Wuchang, has a journey to make every so often in the course of her work that is like this:

She wished to go to a school at Fan-cheng, five days off a railroad. She got off the train at 3.30 in the morning, lighted a lantern, and proceeded to the station. There, in the telegraph office, one spreads one's cot amidst the already sleeping hangers-on of the station. These number about fifteen to eighteen. Here one sleeps till daylight, when one then employs chairs and baggage coolies for the five days' trip.

To get to another part of the field she rides for hours in an express train in modern manner, followed by what seems to the young woman in the chair a journey over a rock quarry, so rough it is and so hard on the human beings who carry her. There is often a train ride that is worse than unpleasant: somewhat dangerous because of the impudent soldiers with whom the cars are always filled. There are boats which afford the passenger only room to stretch her cot, and to stand for dressing in the morning, and house-boats on which one's servant has only a three-foot space in the bow for preparing the food.

There are journeys that require many weeks to make in which the perils and privations are numerous, but at the end of them—away off many miles from anywhere,—she finds much to compensate her for the weariness and discomfort.

"One gets to a school where a regular affiliated student Y. W. C. A. exists. A reception committee of bright-eyed students greet one. If they live far in the interior

they are wearing black pig-tails, cotton jackets, generally blue, trousers instead of skirts. Formal, shining expectancy sits on every countenance. Think of traveling five days away from the railroad and finding the girls like that, girls who are linked up with other Christian students of the different parts of China, and even, with the destitute students of central Europe in intelligent Christian sympathy, for we find them sending in their contributions to the European student relief quite regularly! And they show such cleverness in adapting the Y. W. C. A. to their local needs, and keeping the spiritual content.

"In some of these schools there is a children's committee attached to the Y. W. C. A. cabinet, and it is wonderful to see how the older girls help the children in the Morning Watch worship to form an organization of their own, governed and run by little children. One cabinet has a Sunday committee formed with the idea of helping the students observe Sunday properly. Others have "store" committees, which earn the money the Association must have for local work. Bible committees organize study classes among non-Christian neighborhood children or adults, for the school servants, for the students themselves."

Five days away from a railroad, over almost inaccessible mountain trails, carried on the journey in a chair borne on the shoulders of coolies, untold discomfort and physical weariness, but girls at the end of the journey who are thinking, dreaming, planning, working, just like the girls of our own country to express in everyday service the spirit of Jesus Christ!

Very True!

"I was up in the central part of the state this summer to visit some of the spots where I spent my childhood," said John D. Rockefeller recently. "My car had stopped, and I was looking around, and an old farmer came up to the car and started to talk to me: he didn't know who I was. We chatted together for about five minutes, when he asked me where I was going.

"'I'm going to heaven,' I replied with a smile.

"'Get out!' he said, 'you ain't got enough gasoline!'"

SECONDHAND DOUBT.

It is well for every believer to have a reason for the hope that is in him. We sing of the "faith of our fathers, living still." That faith, if it really is living, must be a firsthand experience, and not simply a faith that has been accepted because it was our fathers'. A vital faith must be a personal experience. It is not simply acquiescing in certain tenets which do not express individual convictions based on personal study and experience. It is quite possible for a person to repeat the great statement of evangelical faith expressed in the Apostles' Creed, and yet be himself far from experiencing the joy of vital Christian experience.

A faith which enables one to emulate the experience of those great heroes enumerated in the 11th chapter of Hebrews, must have more than an intellectual knowledge of statements formed centuries ago. It may mean nothing to say, "I believe in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth," if the life is lived in indifference to God, and leaving him out of one's daily life. To assent to the great statement, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins," and then continue to live in violation of God's commandments, is a subtle form of heresy.

There are many in the younger generation who are realizing this and are protesting against a "secondhand faith." But many

who protest against accepting the faith of their forefathers are willing to accept the doubts of their contemporaries only too readily. A popular slogan among young people today is, "I don't believe." If, however, the reasons for their unbelief are challenged, they are not forthcoming. In other words, the age in which we live is so insistent in the demands upon the time and thought of the present generation that many, in regard to religious matters, do not sift the evidence for their faith or for their doubt. An example of this is found in regard to the virgin birth, which is now being challenged by many, who, when asked to give reasons for their doubt, are non-plussed. It is necessary to have a reason not only for the hope that is in us, but for the doubt which we entertain.

What is needed at the present time is a greater degree of honest intellectual work. In Saint Paul's letter to the Thessalonians he challenges them to "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." This message is perennially needed, but never more so than at the present time.

We do not always know the dangers that we are guided past.

The way to do a great deal for Christ is to keep on doing a little.

Christ never asks of us such busy labor

As leaves no time for resting at his feet:

The waiting attitude of expectation

He oftentimes counts a service most complete.

He sometimes wants our ear, our rapt attention,

That he some sweetest secret may impart:

'Tis always in the time of deepest silence

That heart finds deepest fellowship with heart.

And yet he does love service where 'tis given

By grateful love that clothes itself in deed:

But work that's done beneath the scourge of duty,—

Be sure to such he gives but little heed!

Then seek to please him, whatsoe'er he bids thee,

Whether to do, to suffer, to lie still:

'Twill matter little by what path he leads thee

If in it all thou seek'st to do his will!

CHURCH EQUIPMENT AND EFFICIENCY.

Seldon L. Roberts.*

The tools with which one works have a pronounced effect on the methods used and the results obtained, and so to a large degree help determine the efficiency of the worker. The equipment with which one is content to work is an index to the character, foresight and resourcefulness of the worker, and so becomes a good index to the quality of leadership possessed by that worker, as well as a factor of no mean importance in determining the outcome of the work done.

If on entering a church building you find ample supplies of books and apparatus, as well as comfortable seats, musical instruments, pictures and working tools in the school rooms, all in good condition and in order, you would be fairly safe in predicting that this church is doing a good amount of high grade work. If on entering a church you find it shabby, disorderly, with dog-eared song books and Bibles scattered about the room, and a miscellaneous assortment of month-old announcements, church calendars and Sunday school literature lying on pulpit, desk or table, you need not wait to see the church service or the Sunday school session in action to pronounce judgment. These are unmistakable symptoms of inefficient church work. Even if you find an occasional individual worker who has enterprize and vision, and whose work rates high, the general average of the results obtained will be low, and are apt to be of an inferior quality in addition to their meagerness. Such surroundings produce disorder, irreverence, and other unfortunate mental attitudes both in the people who attend the meetings and in those who do the work.

Really efficient and enterprizing people, such as are needed to teach Sunday classes, plan young people's programs, supervise Sunday school or missionary work, or conduct the music of a church, will not long endure such tools and such surroundings. Either they will secure suitable equipment and bring order out of confusion, or they will leave the place and cease to help in the work. If then the lack of equipment con-

tinues, and the confused and disorderly condition becomes chronic, the situation is unmistakable: those who remain in charge of the work are careless and disorderly, and the work cannot rise higher than the average worker. If people of foresight and enterprize get control of the work, the situation will rapidly change for the better.

The workers' conference of a large Sunday school was in session. The needs of the Junior Department were being discussed. The Junior superintendent was complaining that she had no place to store supplies where they could be classified and kept from molestation under lock and key. In the room where the workers' conference was meeting and where the Junior Department was held on Sunday, were a number of side-wall cupboards.

"How about one of these?"

Everyone "supposed" they were all in use. A new member of the workers' conference immediately investigated, and found that one large section was occupied by an old flower basket with a broken handle, a promiscuous assortment of ancient Sunday school literature, and two dust cloths. The much needed cabinet for Junior supplies had been provided with but a few minutes' investigation. We are too prone to apply the good hymn, "Take me as I am," to all existing conditions in church work, but let a few people of real leadership get into an otherwise careless working force, and tactfully go to work to change things, and the difference becomes evident at once.

The most evident lack in equipment is apt to be in providing for the needs of children. Not infrequently churches will be found with little or no visible evidence, so far as furniture, decorations or special apparatus go, to indicate that a child ever entered the church or was expected to do so. Fortunately these conditions, which so painfully indicate that church leaders think only in adult terms even when thinking of children, are less numerous than they were. The impact of organized Sunday school work, both denominational, and interdenominational, is making itself felt in better provision for the religious needs of the young and growing part of our church con-

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stituency. Not much longer will our little ones be required to dangle their feet from the sharp edges of adult chairs, listen only to adult worship and music, and have adult lessons talked to them, in churches dedicated to him who was so much concerned for their safety and well being. For many reasons, chiefly because they are more susceptible to surroundings than are grown-ups, and because they cannot themselves provide for their own comfort and convenience, but must depend on others, the equipment for the children's part of the church and the church school should be a matter of first concern to the older members of the congregation. The children should at least receive fair treatment when the housing and furnishing of the church school is in question.

What in particular should be the standard or criterion in selecting church equipment?

The irreducible minimum is comfort, convenience, usability.

Someone may think such commonplace suggestions unnecessary. Surely no one would select uncomfortable, inconvenient, or unusable furnishings! They may not have been selected, but I have seen spider-legged tables and long, limber boards supported by a "horse" at either end,—a challenge to every child to wobble, bounce and upset, since they were so admirably suited for such purposes.

I have seen stacks of unsightly, rickety, and uncomfortable folding chairs, each one capable of producing an unbelievable amount of noise on the slightest suggestion, or of giving way under the weight of a husky lad at the most disturbing moments. I have listened to the discords of discarded pianos donated by some member of the congregation, mindful of his own home comforts.

When one remembers these aggregations of junk, one might suspect they were not "selected," but that some diabolical genius of evil, wishing to disturb religious services with the least possible inconvenience and danger to himself, had provided them gratis.

Such commonplace requirements as comfort, convenience, usability, may be so self-evident as not to need discussion, but the average church committee out shopping for

church equipment needs to have these qualities mildly suggested as desirable.

After the minimum requirements of comfort, convenience and usefulness have been provided, the next essential is that the educational needs of the church be met.

Some kinds of teaching can be managed with little or no equipment. One can tell another what he knows without even a text book. A child has in addition to two ears, two eyes, two hands, two feet, a tongue and a good outfit of other muscles, all attached to the same brain as are the ears. If nothing is done to employ these other means of learning, some of which are more active and better gatherers of items of interest than are the ears, they are apt to get busy at many other things than the lesson, which makes it very difficult for a teacher to keep an uninterrupted working connection between the pupil's ears and brain. It is better to make these other avenues of learning your allies than your enemies. But to do that equipment is needed.

There must be things to see,—pictures, drawings, models, maps, books, and other materials. There must be things to handle and to make. But this means many articles, and also a place to store them where they will be unmolested and accessible. A cabinet with suitable compartments will save its cost in a few years in materials that would otherwise be wasted.

If any one is in doubt as to what is needed in the way of educational equipment, consult an expert church school worker, or call in a good public school teacher who has some knowledge of church affairs!

Not least of the requirements for church equipment is beauty.

The qualities of comfort, convenience, usefulness and educational necessity first being met, beauty should then be had, if at all possible. Articles of furniture and apparatus may be plain, but they should never be shoddy or ugly. It is just as easy to secure plain, well made articles, though inexpensive, as it is to secure the unsightly affairs sometimes offered. But most churches have a margin above bare necessities, and this should provide for real beauty. A few upholstering tacks, burlap, and work which the boys and young men will be glad to do, will help much in some

situations. In fact church vacation school experience and a church work bench and tools in some nook will provide not only mended and adorned equipment, but also something for active boys to do to help their church. Church vacation schools have provided many a ragged or broken chair with a new bottom and many a wobbly table with respectable underpinning, besides blackboards, bulletin boards, and signs for church use.

So intimately is our esthetic nature bound up with our religious nature that what is in any way wriggly or unsightly not only offends good taste, but is also apt to lower and damage the religious life. Good music and artistic beauty in the appointments and furnishings of the church, as well as in the equipment for ordinary use, are an element not to be neglected.

David said: "Neither will I offer burnt offering unto Jehovah that cost me noth-

ing." If this attitude enters into our selection of church equipment the problem is largely solved. It will be then a question largely of what is most needed and most usable. For we will then be asking, not "What can we do without?" and "How can we secure that which must be had as cheaply as possible?" but we will ask, "What is needed, and how may we secure that which is useful, serviceable and beautiful?" One of the outstanding observations of church work through the years has been this: whenever a church provides a worthy building, and suitable and beautiful things with which to work, the efficiency of that church is increased. Not only does the building and equipment attract a good number of worthwhile people to attend it, but it also interests and holds many more capable people to do the many things that a church must do to minister in a worthy way to its constituency.

MUSIC IN WORSHIP.

Miss Caroline Bird Parker.

From the earliest times music has played an important part in all religions. In the first records of Brahminism it is classed with the lesser sciences, but it occupied in reality a place on the highest plane, and we find it treated of in the oldest and most sacred work, the Veda. The belief in the power of music was so strong in the minds of the worshipers of this ancient religion that songs for the formation of clouds, for the changing of light to darkness, rain to sunshine, and many other interferences with the laws of nature were written and used.

The charm of music is emphasized in all Indian legends. Long before there were any instruments for the accompaniment of singing the rhythm was marked by the clapping of hands and by the swaying of the figure.

The Bible is a rich treasure-house of song. The lament of David over the death of Saul and Jonathan is one of the most beautiful ever written. The book of Lamentations contains a series of funeral songs. In Isaiah we find a vintage song suddenly changing to one of grief. Turn to the song of Deborah and Barak. You cannot read the line, "Awake, awake, Deborah! Awake, awake, utter a song!" without instinctively listening for Deborah's voice. And then

follows one of the most dramatic things in literature: the assembling of the contending forces, the battle, and finally the triumph of Israel are pictured in such a way that one is almost drawn into the whirlwind of action.

To the greatest singer of all, David, we are indebted for an important part of our worship today.

To the Christian church came this great heritage of song, and it contributed largely to its growth. We have innumerable testimonies to this effect. In the meetings in the catacombs hymns were sung, and it is worthy of note that although St. Paul forbade the voices of women to be raised in speech he did not forbid their singing. St. John Chrysostom writes, "The psalms we sing unite all the voices in one, and the canticles arise, harmonizing in unison young and old, rich and poor, women, men, slaves, citizens." Indeed, it is recorded that the controversies of the early church were carried on in antiphonal song, each side presenting its case in turn. It might be well for the church of the present day to consider the revival of this custom, for bitterness of speech cannot be carried into song.

What a privilege it is to pass from the

confusion of a busy street into a beautiful church with its mellow light! If the organist is playing softly, it is a very callous person who does not feel that he is approaching the presence of God, especially if the architecture of the church is conducive to worship.

If the music of the organ is followed by the united voices of the congregation in that great morning hymn of the 15th century,

Now our morning hymn ascendeth,
Glory, laud and adoration,
Thanks that thou this day wilt lead us,
Praise for thy great lovingkindness:
Lord, we bring a glad oblation,
Glory, laud and adoration!

the consciousness of worship is established, and we feel that we have gathered for a common purpose, regardless of creed,—for music knows no creed. All faiths have contributed to its rich treasure-house, the Jew, the Romanist and the Protestant.

Nothing truer has been said than that "the faith that sings is the faith that most deeply moves men's hearts." More conversions are due to song than to sermon. After the plea, the hymn is used to bring the repentant sinner forward to ask for help to lead the new life. Perhaps the fact that music softens men's hearts is responsible for the establishment of the offertory in our services.

The greatest men and women of the ages have contributed to our religious songs and music,—Abelard, Andrew of Crete, the Duke of Argyll, Bernard of Clairvaux, Bernard of Cluny, Fortunatus, Gerhardt, Isaiah, John of Damascus, Luke, Matthew, Munster, Theodulph of Orleans, Francis Xavier, and many others of centuries ago have given us hymns that appear in every important book of our time. We find also the names of many of the great lights in literature of more modern times: Brontë, Brooks, Chesterton, Cowper, Dryden, Gladstone, Holmes, Howe, Kilmer, Kipling, Lanier, Longfellow, Lowell, Luther, Martineau, Newman, Parker, Phelps, Pope, Sill, Stowe, Tennyson, Van Dyke, Watts, Wesley, Whittier, Wordsworth, and so on. Is there so important an anthology of poetry as a good hymn book? I think not. The best minds of all ages have made their gifts to it.

As the hope of the church lies in the children, so it is in our work with them that we must plant our best seed. And they are

quick to respond. It is a mistake to think that little children must be taught jingles, and that they are unable to understand the better hymns and tunes.

The matron of an orphan asylum told me not long ago that one of the most interesting experiences in her work was the teaching of hymns to the very young children under her care. She said they invariably chose the better ones if given a choice, and that they instantly recognized a good hymn. When the inferior ones were sung they asked for the better ones, and these children chose the best naturally, for they had come from homes where there was no culture, and from parents from whom they could not have inherited this appreciation of the beautiful. So it is well to remember that our young people turn to the good, and if we find they have formed a taste for the ephemeral, we may be sure they have their elders to thank for it.

The children may not be able to understand a sermon, and they grow restless if required to listen to one that is very long, but they love to sing, and in doing so they feel they are taking part in the service. Singing is a form of activity, and is useful in the Sunday school, but we must be sure the music is worthwhile, or it will prove a hindrance to worship. It must have the spirit of beauty, and it will then help us to achieve God-consciousness. We must not use music that will lift the feet as well as the heart. It must hold the people to worship, and not be used for recreation. Nor should a hymn be used as a convenience. One of the most disturbing things in service is the occasional announcement that a part of the congregation may withdraw during the singing of a hymn. Now, it is just possible that the people who are remaining desire to continue to worship God by song, but this mood is quickly dissipated in the confusion that follows.

A great preacher in the largest city of our country recently planned a service of music, and intended making a brief address at the close. After the musical service was concluded he said:

"This service has been so reverent, and the Spirit of God is so evidently in this place, that I do not feel like adding any words."

The congregation quietly withdrew, tak-

ing with them one of the greatest lessons in worship they had ever experienced.

Fortunately the church of today is awake to the great need of the development of reverence in worship, and is aware of the aid that may come through all forms of beauty in the services. The psychology of atmosphere is more than a fad. One of the outcomes of this awakening is the appointment of music commissions in almost every denomination, and the members have been chosen with the greatest care. 1924 was the four hundredth anniversary of the first Protestant hymnal for the people,—Luther's. It consisted of eight hymns, four of which Luther wrote himself. It is an interesting fact that the Lutheran commission was one of the first to function in our time, and it has already produced a service book and a hymnal, so that (to quote their words,) "the devotional life shall be strengthened and nourished."

One outcome of the great Methodist Episcopal Conference in Springfield last May was the appointment of a commission in that always forward-looking denomination. Their work up to the present time is inspirational, and they are endeavoring to bring to the attention of their churches the fine material which has already been provided by the publication of their splendid hymnals, and which is too often set aside for very unworthy hymns.

The Protestant Episcopal church has never tolerated inferior music in its churches, and we may look for splendid results from the work of its commission. Already it is preparing a hymn and tune book for the use of the young people in the Sunday school.

The great interest in the music of the church leads us to hope that it is passing out of the state of flux in which it has been wavering during the past quarter of a century, perhaps we may say nearly half a century. Fortunately superficiality does not take as deep root as reality, and the roots of irreverent music in our churches are being eradicated. Let us do all that we can to hasten the day when they will have disappeared, for music occupies a large part of the time that is given to our public worship, and this time is too precious to be wasted, or worse! Especially is this true in our work with the boys and girls, for

they are in contact with the best in their day schools, and they are sure to drop out of Sunday school if they find it is not worthwhile. The young of today are rather critical of their elders, and they have fairly good grounds when they reach the subject of the music of some of our churches.

I think it was Confucius who said that heaven was the house of hymns. If this is true, it behooves us to make some preparation here on earth so that we may be worthy members of the choir celestial when we receive the call to join it. Surely some of our earthly hymning reaches to heaven, and we must try and not make it an offence to those perfectly trained listeners. I fear that sometimes it may seem like blasphemy.

In closing I want to express the hope that more and more our theological schools will train our young men who are to occupy pulpits in the appreciation of good religious music. I do not think any student should be allowed to graduate who has not had considerable instruction in the music of the church. He may not be able to sing well himself, but he must know and appreciate the dignity of music in worship, and understand how he may be able to use it to help, and not hinder, his work. And he should know the possibilities of the organ, as well as those of the vocal chords.

One of the theological schools, Princeton, is now demonstrating its work in sacred music. It has formed several quartettes and a fine chorus from its student body, and is giving concerts, the programs of which are made up entirely of religious music, in New York City, Philadelphia, Trenton, and other cities near Princeton. Their success has been so great that they are embarrassed by the number of invitations to appear before great audiences. I hope more and more the theological seminaries may be able to send out students to show what they are doing in training their boys in this branch of the work which will be so important to them when they go out as heads of churches. If each one will do what is possible in the vicinity of the seminary, soon throughout the length and breadth of this land the people will begin to realize the importance of music in worship, and it is not improbable that some who have been unaccustomed to church worship will be introduced to it by its apostles of music.

MUSIC AS A FACTOR OF EFFICIENCY IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Prof. J. B. Trowbridge.*

From the dawn of history music has been a vital influence in human life. In war and worship, in work and play, in the home, in the school, in the church,—in every phase of human activity music has been a spontaneous and elemental means of expression. The effectiveness of music was recognized long before any advance was made in the art as such. Its function was perceived and realized ages before there was much, if any, thought or investigation regarding its nature.

Leon Gautier, in his history of the epic poetry of France, in an imaginative and dramatic passage pictures the first man coming fresh from the hand of his Creator, beholding the wonders of the universe about him, and raising his voice in a hymn of praise to God. It is true that wherever we find any trace of primitive man, through the spade of the archeologist, through tradition, through history or in the inspired Word, we find evidence of his religious nature and its expression in song, crude though it may have been.

The music of the Christian church, as we find it today, comes as a rich heritage that has grown in beauty and value with each succeeding generation. With each distinctive epoch in church history there has been an accompanying burst of song that often carried the day with its emotional appeal where the colder and more didactic discourse would have failed. Pure music as an art has developed largely through its association with the church, and whether used alone or in association with hymns and sacred lyrics, it has been a real handmaid of religion.

In speaking of church music we instinctively think of hymn singing, and this involves the art of poetry, in the exercise of which many of the choicest souls of all time have poured out their hearts in adoration and praise to God in forms that have become a permanent channel of worship for the church. Four hundred thousand Christian hymns are extant, and doubtless many more have been lost, discarded or forgotten.

The Christian songs of the first century were preceded by the wonderful background of Hebrew worship that for fifteen hundred

years maintained a glory and vitality that could not be overthrown by the many wars and captivities to which the Chosen People were subjected. The material for this wonderful system of praise and worship of Jehovah was the Psalms, forming a body of sacred song that has never been surpassed for beauty and grandeur. "The stream of song in David ran broad and deep. The Old Testament psalm has so sounded the deepest notes of the soul in joy and sorrow that it is adequate for Christian as well as Jewish hearts. It was not for an age, but for all time." "David made sacred song a real part of the worship of the sanctuary as it had not been in the Tabernacle service, making it a fixed part of the daily worship of Jehovah."

The service, in Solomon's Temple was doubtless the most elaborate example of liturgical worship the world has ever seen. A choir of four thousand singers and players had been organized by David and placed under the direction of Chenaniah and Asaph, with prescribed psalms for every day of the week and more elaborate ritual for feast days, with antiphonal singing that has never been equalled. The services in Herod's Temple in the time of Christ were elaborate, and second only to those of Solomon's time.

On that memorable night when our Lord partook of the Last Supper with the eleven, he joined with them in a "hymn," as recorded in Matthew 26. 30. This was doubtless "The Great Hallel," Psalms 113 to 118, which was the prescribed portion of the liturgy to be sung at the Passover celebration. It is an inspiring thought that Jesus thus put his stamp of approval upon sacred song, and in his last hours before making the great sacrifice joined in the singing of such words as

What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?

I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.

The stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner.

Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and forever more!

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory!

O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever!

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The Hebrew liturgy formed the basis of Christian hymnody. The history of the early church bears frequent testimony to the joy of Christians that could be expressed only in songs of praise. They sang in all assemblies, in the home, in prison, in the catacombs, often at the peril of their lives: everywhere, even in the distant provinces, as told by the younger Pliny in his famous letter to the Emperor Trajan, written from Bithynia in the year 112, in which a strange sect is described as meeting at dawn to "sing hymns to Christ as God." Much of the singing of the early Christians doubtless was through the medium of the Psalms, with which they were so familiar, yet we have the well known hymn, "Shepherd of Tender Youth," written by Clement of Alexandria in the second century, and recent research has brought to light hymns written in the first century and doubtless in use during the lives of the apostles.

Hymns are not good merely because they are old, except for this,—those that live on, generation after generation, do so only because they contain vital truth. The real hymn is Scriptural in sentiment and expression. And so in our church music lists today there are many hymn treasures that date back to the early centuries and come to us with a freshness and authority that are very close to that of Scripture itself, and the reason is because they are saturated with the Word. "Gloria Patri," "Gloria in Excelsis," the "Ter Sanctus" and the "Te Deum" are the best illustrations of these.

From the time of the conversion of Constantine there was a rapid development in the liturgy of the mass, the sumptuous beauty of which drew the worshiper away from the simple, direct worship hitherto practised by the early Christian. But in spite of many abuses there were many noble souls seeking and finding God through these forms. Here and there through the Dark Ages testimony to the power of song has been left, as that of Augustine in his "Confessions," upon hearing the Ambrosian chant in the Milan Cathedral: "How I wept at thy hymns and canticles, pierced to the quick by the voice of thy melodious church! Those voices flowed into my ears and the truth distilled into my heart, and thence there streamed forth a devout emotion, and my tears ran down, and happy was I

therein." Then there was Bernard of Cluny, in the 12th century, singing of the heavenly country, and Bernard of Clairvaux pouring out his heart's devotion in "The Name of Jesus" and "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded," found today in every standard hymn book.

In the 16th century came the giant Luther, with a flood of sacred melody as an accompaniment to his sermons and his open defiance to papal power. The first Protestant hymn book was published by Luther in 1524, containing eight hymns and five tunes. Regarding these hymns he wrote, "I wish, after the example of the prophets and the ancient fathers of the church, to make Psalms for the people, that is to say, sacred hymns, so that the Word of God may dwell among the people by means of song also." His great song, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God," stands like a Gibraltar among the classic hymns, and illustrates, both in lyric and tune, the qualities of sincerity and rugged strength that were characteristic of Reformation music.

Congregational singing had been practically abolished by the Council of Laodicea in the 4th century. According to this decree only "those who mount the ambo and sing from the book" were allowed to take part in the singing of the churches. One of the greatest accomplishments of the Reformation was the restoring and popularizing of congregational singing, which is and always has been the most potent factor in church music. Luther's enemies said that he did more harm with his hymns than he did by his sermons, and Coleridge expressed the judgment that "Luther did as much for the Reformation by his hymns as he did by his translation of the Bible." It is the opinion of many that the preaching of Luther's doctrine would have been a comparative failure had not his psalms and hymns given wings to his teaching. He used the songs of the common people, such as were sung at harvests and festivals, adapting sacred words to them, and in this he did his greatest musical work.

An interesting description of Protestant worship in Geneva in 1557 is on record, which gives some enlightening suggestions for present-day problems. The visitor at this service says, "Each one draws from his pocket a small book, which contains the

Psalms, with notes, and out of full hearts, in the native speech, the congregation sing before and after the sermon. Every one testifies to me how great consolation and edification are derived from this custom."

The English Reformation under the Wesleys was likewise a singing reformation, and Charles Wesley, the singer, is a close second to his more prominent brother in the practical results of this great movement. Professor Dickinson says, "Whatever effect the exuberant singing of the Methodist assemblies may have had upon a cultivated ear, it is certain that the enthusiastic welcome accorded by the Wesleys to popular music as a proselyting agent, and the latitude permitted to free invention and adoption of hymns and tunes, gave an impulse to a purer and nobler style of congregational song which has never been lost."

The latest and most vital of all the singing revivals in the church is the gospel song epoch, which began early in the 19th century in a quiet way with Lowell Mason, Geo. F. Root, Wm. Bradbury, and others, bursting out in a flame that swept the Protestant world in the seventies, with Moody and Sankey in England and Whittle and Bliss in America. Many evangelists and singers have followed these great leaders in nationwide and worldwide tours during the last fifty years, and in all of them gospel song has had a mighty influence, both in attracting people in large numbers, in preparing audiences to receive the messages of the preachers, and also in giving out a definite message in the songs themselves.

Paul exhorts us in Colossians 3.16 and Ephesians 5.19 to sing and make melody in "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." The United Presbyterian interprets this to mean the Psalms only, yet the evidence is strong that there was a body of sacred song growing up and being used by the early Christians. The words of Scripture here describe the two parts into which the material in our hymn books is divided. "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" suggests the true gospel song, which is directed manward in testimony, instruction or inspirational utterance; while "singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" described the nature and office of the true hymn, which is directed Godward in praise, worship and

adoration. Beecher says, "Hymns are the exponent of the innermost piety of the church." The true hymn coördinates with prayer and praise, the gospel song with exposition and exhortation.

In present-day problems in church music we meet the age-old contention of art for a place in the church as an end in itself. This can never be settled in favor of music without bringing in a dead formalism, of which church history gives us all too many examples. "Art for art's sake" is not a slogan the church can accept. Luther said, "I am not of the opinion that through the gospel all arts should be banished and driven away, as some zealots want to make us believe: but I wish to see all arts, principally music, in the service of him who gave and created all."

On the other extreme there is the jazz spirit, which does not concern itself with art and which has invaded the sacred precincts with a deadly virus. It has crept into the choir gallery, and has affected especially our Sunday school and evangelistic song books. A hopeful indication, however, comes from independent publishers as well as denominational boards, who are putting out books in which are found an increasing number of standard hymns.

In that remarkable dialogue recorded in Exodus 4.2, God said to Moses: "What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod." This rod was the medium to be used in the working of many wonders, and finally accomplished what discourse and petition could not have done. So the church musical director stands with his baton, the soloist with his song, the organist with his instrument,—the greatest in possibility ever developed,—the layman in his pew with a hymn book in his hand, each with a vital part and a serious responsibility in bearing the glorious and vital message of the gospel through music. The old idea in the church was that music is clerical: in the Protestant church it is laic. Catholic music was and is liturgic and unalterable: ours is free and democratic. We believe that worship music should not be vicarious, but that each should approach the throne of God with oblations of praise as well as prayer, bearing the glorious and vital message of the gospel with united hearts and voices, thus making congregational singing the climax of church music.

PILATE'S THREE QUESTIONS.*

II. "WHAT IS TRUTH?"

Rev. J. D. Jones, D. D.

Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?
John 18. 38.

I want to speak with you this morning about the second of these great and critical questions which Pilate addressed to Jesus in the course of his trial.

It arose directly, as you will notice, out of that question about kingship which we discussed yesterday. It was a monstrous and wicked suggestion the high priest and others had made when they accused Jesus of aspiring to be a rival to Cæsar. It was a charge which they themselves knew to be false. On the only occasion on which Christ had been challenged as to whether it was right for a Jew to pay tribute to Cæsar, he had said, "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." It was not rebellion he had inculcated, but loyalty. But the priests and elders were not fastidious or scrupulous people. They did not trouble themselves as to the truth of their accusation. What made them adopt it was that it was the most likely accusation to extort a conviction from Pilate, for it was at his peril any Roman governor tolerated anyone who menaced the authority of the emperor. Pilate saw through the absurdity of the charge on the instant. This lonely friendless Person was no rival to Cæsar.

"Art thou," he asked, thou poor, helpless, deserted creature, "the king of the Jews?"

Jesus might have answered with a flat and absolute denial. He would have been strictly true, for he aspired to no such kingship as the Jews alleged. But if he had answered with a bare, unqualified negative, Pilate might have been given the impression that he did not claim a kingdom of any sort. He was a king—of a certain kind, and he wanted Pilate to know it. So he began explaining to Pilate that his kingdom was not of this world. It didn't belong to the same order of thing as Cæsar's. If it had been an earthly one, his servants would have fought to prevent his being seized by the Jews. But his kingdom wasn't a king-

dom of earthly pomp and dominion at all. And in answer to Pilate's astonished question, "Art thou a king, then?" Jesus proceeded to describe his kingdom positively.

"To this end have I been born," he said, "and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice."

That was the kingdom Jesus had come to establish, the kingdom of the truth, and all who loved the truth were his willing subjects.

Before I pass on I want you to notice that Jesus at this point was doing more than merely giving a general description of his kingdom. When he said, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice," he was really angling for Pilate's soul. I make no apology for the use of that term, for Jesus himself said that his aim for his apostles was to make them "fishers of men." He himself was just now "fishing" for Pilate. He was not so much enlightening his judge as appealing to him.

I wonder whether I am wrong in thinking that Jesus had a profound pity for Pilate? You remember what the evangelist says about his feelings towards the rich young ruler who came running to him, and knelt before him, and asked him, "Good master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" "Jesus looking upon him, loved him." It would perhaps be too much to say that Jesus looking on Pilate loved him, but I am quite sure that he pitied him with a deep and tender pity. Jesus saw how he struggled to do the right thing, he saw that he was having a fight for his soul, and he wanted to help him. And when he said, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice," he was really making an appeal to Pilate, he was speaking to Pilate's conscience, trying to reinforce it, he was stretching out a helping hand to struggling and hard-pressed Pilate.

There are some commentators who object to this remark of Christ's about "Every one that is of the truth" as being Western in idea, rather than Oriental. Perhaps it is, but just now Christ was dealing with a

* Northfield General Conference, 1924.

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Westerner. A good fisherman always adapts his bait to his fish. When Jesus bore his witness before the Sanhedrin he did it in the words of ancient prophecy, words which were quite familiar to them, and spoke of himself as the Messiah of the national expectation. “Henceforth,” he said, “ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven.” To the Jew Jesus spoke as a Jew, but that appeal would have awakened no sort of response in Pilate. But like most Westerners he had heard many a discussion about “Aletheia,” truth. That was what serious minded people both in Greece and Rome were in search of, truth. When Jesus said, “Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice,” he was testing Pilate’s soul to see whether he had any such longing, he was making his appeal to Pilate’s conscience. For clearly Pilate had some respect for truth, obviously he wanted to do the right thing. Equally obviously he was impressed by the purity and goodness of Jesus. The only question was whether he loved truth and right well enough to take his stand in scorn of consequence. “Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice,”—it was an appeal to Pilate to listen to the dictates of his conscience and to show himself a true man.

Jesus came to seek and to save. Here he is seeking to save the soul of Pilate. Not even Pilate was allowed to sell himself into perdition without warning and appeal. Jesus had a great pity for Pilate,—for this man struggling between duty and self-interest, between his sense of right and his fear for his position. There was something in Pilate that responded to Jesus. Our Lord wished to help him to save his soul by letting that response find expression in action. It was a case of Jesus saying to Pilate so tenderly and appealingly, “Follow me!”

What a chance Pilate had at that moment! If he had only “heard” Christ’s voice, heard it and whatever the risk, obeyed it, he might have been numbered with the saints in glory everlasting! But what response did he make? “Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?” and without giving Jesus a chance to answer went out again to confront the Jews.

Now the question which confronts us at this point is this, In what spirit did Pilate

ask that question? Our interpretation of Pilate at any rate will largely depend on the spirit in which we assume he asked it. More than one view of Pilate’s spirit and temper has been taken.

PILATE’S SPIRIT.

Perhaps the most familiar interpretation is that given by Bacon in his “Essays.” The first essay in the volume is the essay on truth, and the first sentence in the essay runs like this, “What is truth? said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer.”

Jesting Pilate! According to Bacon the question was a gibe, a jeer, a joke. Well, it is perhaps audacious to venture to differ from the great Elizabethan, but nevertheless I am absolutely persuaded that Bacon is wrong. Pilate at this particular moment was in no mood for jesting. There was nothing humorous in the situation. All the elements of tragedy were present, tragedy for Jesus and tragedy for himself. He saw cruel priests hounding an innocent man, a pure and holy man, to death. He realized that they were trying to compel him to become their instrument of the foul murder they were contemplating. Jestling Pilate! Pilate in all his life was never in a less likely mood for jesting than now, for with all his faults he had the instinctive sense of justice so characteristic of the Romans. And he hated to be bullied and brow-beaten into a crime he loathed. His feelings at this moment, if I had to guess at them, were feelings of burning indignation against the priests, mingled perhaps with a certain bitter and half-contemptuous pity for himself for allowing himself to be frightened by them at all. A man in that frame of mind is in no mood for joking. Whatever else this question may have been, it certainly was not a jest.

There are others who take the view that the question is the agonized cry of a man who longed for the truth above everything else. It is the exact antithesis of the “jesting Pilate” view made popular by Bacon. But this view is as impossible as the other. “There is nothing of real reverence or seriousness in his word, still less of awe,” says Westcott, and the proof of that is that he did not stay for an answer, he did not give Jesus a chance to reply. Do you imagine a real, earnest truth-seeker would have broken

off the colloquy like that? Hadn't Jesus just told him in almost as many words that the truth was in his keeping, that he had come into the world to answer those very questions concerning truth which for generations had occupied the minds of serious men? Did he not in that last sentence, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice," almost invite Pilate to ask him questions concerning that truth he had come to reveal? Can you conceive of a really earnest man neglecting to probe into the matter a little further to find out whether Jesus had any real light to give on those great problems which were vexing men's souls? No! However disposed we may be to take a favorable view of Pilate's character, we cannot represent him as a seeker after truth. What he did was not to ask questions of this Person who professed to be king of truth, but to break off the conversation. "What is truth?" he said with a shrug of the shoulders, and then left Jesus to go face his accusers once again.

The truth about Pilate lies midway between these two interpretations. When he asked the question, "What is truth," he wasn't jesting and he wasn't the anxious inquirer. He asked the question half sadly, half cynically, as if he would say, "What is the use of talking about truth? If there is any such thing it is unattainable, and in searching for it men are following a mere will-o'-the-wisp." "It is the expression," Godet says, "of a frivolous scepticism such as is frequently met with in the man of the world, and especially in the statesman." I would delete that word "frivolous" and say it is the expression of a rather sad and bitter scepticism. The age in which Pilate lived was a sceptical age. Faith in the old religions had disappeared, and no new and better faith had as yet come to take its place. The old pagan worshipers were still maintained, but the cultured part of mankind had ceased to believe in them. They knew they were not true. Further, not only had there been this decay of faith, but there were certain schools of philosophers who doubted the reality of their own age. They challenged the validity of the evidence of the senses. They denied the possibility of knowing a thing in itself. The result was that amongst the educated people the spirit of scepticism was almost universal. In

some respects these early years of the Christian era were very like the times of four and twenty years ago, when agnosticism was the fashionable creed or no creed in England. Pilate was an agnostic, and it is the cynical, bitter, disillusioned temper of the agnostic that breathes through this question, "What is truth?"

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE QUESTION.

But whatever the spirit in which Pilate asked it, the question itself is the most critical and vital that man can ask. "What is truth?" Men have been asking that question all down the centuries, asking it wistfully, passionately, beseechingly. They are asking it still. All the intellectual unrest and ferment of our day are just the evidence of men's quest for the truth. And the truth they are in search of is ultimate truth. And ultimate truth, as I conceive of it, has to do with the question of God and his relationship to the human soul.

It is not a matter of historical or scientific truth. It may well be that we have not discovered all the truth even in these two spheres. We certainly haven't in the latter one. But both these spheres are open to the inquiring intellect of man, and the truth will be gradually brought to light. But this is not the truth that really matters. This is not the truth that affects life. This is not the truth that answers the clamorous questions of the soul. After all, a man can live a noble life without knowing anything about astronomy or geology. He may live bravely today without knowing anything about the history of the planet on which his lot is cast. He can live quite happily without knowing anything about atoms and electrons. But it is of absolutely vital importance to man to know whether there is a God, what sort of a God he is, what are his feelings towards mankind. It is of vital importance for him to know whether he is a creature of time or an heir of eternity, whether he has these few brief years, nothing more, or whether he has "for ever."

These are the critical and vital questions, answers to which are essential to man's greatness of character and peace of mind. I am not denying that multitudes of men seem capable of ignoring these questions, and seem to live gaily and merrily without

troubling themselves about them. They are people who live in the flesh, and who mind the things of the flesh. They live for the immediate interests and pleasures of the day, and never concern themselves with life's issues. They may wake to the seriousness of these questions too late to make holy living possible, but they must wake to them and find some answer to them if they are to have a “peaceful passing.”

It is only the truth that can set us free from tragic errors in life, and dreads and terrors in death. That is why the New Testament sets such stress upon the importance of “knowing.” Let this one sentence suffice by way of illustration: “This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent!” Life is dependent on knowing. That is why, I repeat again, that this question, “What is truth,” is the most critical and vital that man can ask, and in some fashion or another all men are asking it.

JESUS—THE QUESTION'S ANSWER.

Can we discover the answer to it? Only, it seems to me, in part.

We cannot by searching find out God. Even on the very point of his existence men are not sure, they speak with divided voices. To some the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Others, however, scan the skies with their telescopes and find not God, but law. For myself, I feel that God is a necessity of thought, that behind this created world there is a creative mind, that back of the law there is a Lawgiver.

But even if God's existence is granted, his nature still eludes us. All that men can discover are “parts of his ways.” All the light they see is broken light.

And what is true about God is true also about man. Left to themselves, men stumble and grope about as to the real meaning and purpose of human life. That is why we have our varying schools of morals, the Stoic, the Epicurean, the utilitarian, the hedonistic. When it comes to a question of whether he is mortal or immortal, the human mind is brought entirely to a stand. For while the human heart protests against the idea that death is the end, there the grave stands, a stark fact, which seems to shout out a blank denial of any continuance

of life. At the best the human intellect cannot give any full and satisfying answer to this question, “What is truth?” It cannot meet the imperious challenger of the soul.

But what man cannot discover God may reveal; and it was for revelation as well as redemption that God sent his Son. He came as a light to illumine our darkness. All the truth we require to know is in him. In him the soul finds answer to its queries. When men learn of him, they find rest unto their souls.

“What is truth?” The answer to that question is JESUS CHRIST, himself. He not only bears witness to the truth, but he himself is the truth.

Once again I want you to notice that the truth here is ultimate truth. We have no right to set Jesus up as a final authority upon history and science. He claimed no supremacy in these spheres. Very likely so far as history and science went, he shared in the ideas of his time and spoke the language of his time. It is within the sphere of religion that Christ is authoritative. It is upon the great questions of God and the soul, of life and death, that his word is final. He revealed the truth in his words, he was the truth in his life.

(a) Perhaps that is “the truth” men most eagerly and passionately desire to know, the truth about God. Not so much about God's existence, for spite of all difficulties and doubts, belief in God is practically universal, but the truth about his nature: what sort of a God is he, and especially how he feels towards men and women with their failings and their sins.

For men who believed in the existence of God could go terribly astray as to his nature. The gods some primitive and savage peoples worship today are perfect fiends in their cruelty. The gods of ancient Greece were represented as lecherers and adulterers. Christ came into the world to tell us what God is like. He himself was God manifest in the flesh. Israel had found out the basal truth about God, that he was righteous and holy. But to think of God simply as righteous and holy left him cold and forbidding as snow on an Alpine peak. Christ clothed God's righteousness and holiness with tenderness and love, so that he became warm and gracious like that same snow-clad peak when suffused with the crimson afterglow.

That was the truth about God which Jesus taught, that God was not only good but that he was kind, that he was not only holy but that he was merciful. The name by which he taught men to call him was that gracious name father. And his attitude towards men, he said, was that of forgiving love. He taught all that in the exquisite story of the welcome the father gave to the returning prodigal. God yearns over men as that father did over his son, and God will welcome back his children who have strayed and sinned, with the kiss and the best robe. God is love, forgiving and redeeming love: that is the truth about God.

And it is in Christ's life even more than in his words that that truth stands declared. After all, no words, however passionate, are adequate to the description of love: it is in deeds that its real splendor flashes upon our souls. A love letter is a poor attempt to describe love compared to the devotion of the life, and although Christ spoke wonderful and moving words about the love of God, it is not in these words that its length and breadth and height and depth are to be discovered, but in what he was and did. In that life of ministry "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father," but above everything else in his sacrificial death on that shameful cross. He loved us so well that to redeem us he suffered in our stead.

"O 'twas love, 'twas wondrous love,
The love of Christ for me!
It brought the Saviour from above
To die on Calvary."

Yes, it was wondrous love! Words are bankrupt to describe it. But it was not Christ's love simply: it was God's love, too. "God was in Christ, reconciling." That is the truth about God—he is a merciful, forgiving, redeeming God. He is a father of uttermost love.

(b) Next to the truth about God, perhaps man desired most to know the purpose of life and the truth about the end. And once again the truth is revealed in him: for he is not only the express image of God, but he is also the ideal for man.

By universal admission human life is to be seen at its noblest and best in Jesus. As I said yesterday, he is an unchallenged king in the realm of character. And the real secret of that glorious and wonderful life

is here, he came not to be ministered unto but to minister. He interpreted life not in terms of self-interest, but in those of service. There we have the meaning of life made clear, the road at once to greatness and happiness marked out: we gain life by giving it away. We win greatness and happiness by living not for the good we can get, but for the good we can do.

And as Christ is the truth about the meaning and purpose of life, so is he the truth about life's end and the beyond. For he is a Christ who has died and is alive again. He taught us in words that God is not the God of the dead but of the living, but he didn't leave it there. He himself died, and after he died he came back again just to make us sure that there are "sweet fields beyond the swelling flood." Plato could guess about immortality, but it is Jesus who makes us sure.

The answer to all the heart's queries as we stand by the open grave is to be found in him.

"What is truth?" asked Pilate. If he had been in earnest he had the chance just then of learning the truth about God and the soul and the beyond, those tremendous questions which all down the ages have perplexed and harassed men's hearts. And that is Pilate's condemnation: he did not wait for an answer, the truth was not a matter of vital concern to him. He did not hear Christ's voice because he was not of the truth.

My brethren, are we "of the truth"? Are we honestly desirous of knowing the truth about God and the soul, about life and the beyond? If we are, we shall hear Christ's voice. Everyone who has the love of truth in his soul heareth his voice. He "hears" in the sense of listening and obeying. And the question which I venture to ask as I close is this, Have we listened to his voice? Jesus is set for the rise or fall of all men. He is a principle of division. He constrains men to reveal themselves. In contact with him everyone discloses the bias of his soul. All honest-hearted people listen to him. If men refuse to listen it is because their hearts are evil, they love the darkness rather than the light. The truth has come to our world in Jesus, the truth that makes us free, the truth that gives us life. What have you done with it?

PRACTICAL PROBLEMS OF THE DEVOTIONAL LIFE.

II. SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE.

Rev. Albert D. Belden.*

Belief in the personal guidance of the trusting soul by God is fundamental to Christianity. Jesus taught quite definitely that the true life of the human soul with God is one of personal friendship. "The Father himself loveth you," said he. Also, "If a man will love me he will keep my Word, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." It is impossible to think of such close personal companionship of the soul by God failing to resolve itself into the soundest spiritual guidance, and this is borne out by the story of the apostles and the saints of the Christian era, who have ever been deeply conscious of the guiding hand of Providence.

Yet Christian people have their difficulties over this matter. It seems to them that they often make mistakes, and that life often gets into a hopeless muddle. Looking back, they think they can see a wiser course than the one they took: why were they not prompted or guided to that course? Others are inclined to think that it is presumptuous for the ordinary disciple to expect God to give special guidance or to supply suddenly a wisdom that one has failed to gather through the years.

It will be well for us, therefore, to look at the necessity for this belief.

LOVE'S NECESSITY.

There is an absolute value in the human soul according to the teaching of Jesus. "Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without your Father. Of how much more value are ye!" None of us are spare parts or waste products: every one of us has his place in the divine economy. And all this by the grace of God. It is not our doing. It is his own idea, it is because he chooses to set his love upon us in the knowledge that eventually he can make us worth the loving.

Now there is no necessity so powerful as love's necessity. Were it a necessity merely of nature, we might fear some ingenious

circumvention of it. Were it dependent only upon our own desire, we might doubt our power to realize it. But it is a necessity born of God's determination to create us in his own image, loved, lovable, and loving. Therefore we can agree with Tennyson

That nothing walks with aimless feet,
That not one soul shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made his pile complete.

We must believe that steadily, strenuously, incessantly, the divine Spirit is seeking leave and opportunity in every soul to take effective control, yet always in such a way as to respect the self-government and personal preference of the disciple.

THE BLESSING OF UNCERTAINTY.

There may be good reasons, indeed the best, as to why the divine guidance is not thrust upon us crudely and obtrusively. Amongst other things we should certainly lose the inestimable blessing of uncertainty.

There is a passion for freedom in the human soul which revolts strongly against having everything, as we say, "cut and dried" for it; which would rather make blunders than have its power for making anything filched from it. God dare not, therefore, settle things for us apart from the working of our own minds, for whilst in such a case there would be no error in our action, neither would there be any virtue. Our personal knowledge, our power of judgment, our character, would be simply superfluous. There is a high moral value in walking by faith rather than by sight, in making ventures and taking risks for the sake of principle and with the courage of personal conviction.

This is undoubtedly the reason why God has provided us with no infallible guide, either in priest, institution, or book. God's choice evidently lay between making the human mind a mechanical indicator on the one hand, or a personal channel on the other: and we may be everlastingly grateful, whatever the cost, that God decided to make us

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his children, and not his mechanisms. Faith is of the very essence of life. It is the launch forward of life itself in generous trustfulness of the Creator: and how repeatedly that leap is justified!

Our steps fall on the seeming void
To find the rock beneath.

This is why God's guidance is not more vivid, why it comes to us as a fitful glimmer in the dark, as a faint call, a quiet intuition, a gleam here and there of a shining principle, but always needing the use of our own judgment and a certain degree of courage in our choice.

This, we may say, is God's general rule, though there are exceptions. For urgent and specific reasons he may descend upon a soul with overwhelming power. It would seem from history as though God sometimes "commandeers" a soul for the benefit of the race.

GUIDANCE THROUGH THE RACE.

Further, we must remember that the truth that comes to us through the race, through the stores of general wisdom, is as much God's guidance as anything said directly to one's soul.

We must not permit our belief in God's individual providence to betray us into megalomania. It must be balanced by a humble and reverent attitude towards that part of his revelation which comes to us through the minds of our fellows.

Here is the place of convention, which ought never to be despised or defied without the strongest possible moral reasons, for in it is distilled the wisdom of the ages. Neither, of course, should convention be blindly accepted: it should be endorsed intelligently with a reason for the faith that one places in it. There would not be half so much revolt against convention if it were presented reasonably to each new generation.

Here, too, is one place of the Bible, with its unique store and range of human experience of God and life, and with its divine revelation of principle, disclosing the very character of God.

Here, too, is the place for the traditions and teachings of the church, and for a wide research on the part of the soul into all the findings of human wisdom. There is much to be said for the general respect

in which what we call "common sense" is held. Such common sense is continually proving itself a genuine expression of the mind of God: which, of course, is the meaning of the old saying "*Vox populi, vox Dei*," the voice of the people is the voice of God.

GUIDANCE THROUGH MORAL SENSE.

We ought not to expect special messages from God for situations that can be resolved by common sense. God is not going to reveal all afresh to you in the 20th century what you ought already to have discovered from the Ten Commandments or from the Sermon on the Mount. When the lawyer came to Jesus tempting him and asking, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus, perhaps somewhat caustically, referred him to the Law, in which he was supposed to be versed. The writer remembers being himself in a position in which it is customary for ministers to seek special guidance from God, yet such guidance seemed strangely withheld, until he suddenly realized that there was simply blazing in the midst of the problem a clear moral duty which made only one solution possible. It was with relief that he realized that no message might be expected from God releasing him from a moral obligation. You can never achieve right by doing something wrong on the way. Consider this confession from an experienced Christian:

"I got fearfully weak-kneed about a certain action I had taken, following, as I believed, the plain guidance of outward circumstances. It was justified, however, by an eleventh hour intervention of divine Providence which seemed to me almost miraculous. There was no inner guidance except that of Christian principle, and I believe I have underrated the value of such leading in a desire for more vivid experiences of the inner light."

LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT!

But what are the positive factors that render us amenable to the inspirations of God?

The first consideration is emphasized by the psalmist in that crisp, clear statement, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord."

We can scarcely expect God to be much interested in guiding us for our own petty

and personal success, irrespective of his great redemptive purpose in the world. We must give first place in our life to his preferences for character, for goodness, for justice, honesty and love between men.

Now undoubtedly in this consideration we lay our finger upon a point of resistance and a most fruitful source of misunderstanding. There are people who imagine that in return for a purely sentimental attachment to Christianity they are going to be immune from misfortune and trouble. The writer has known so many souls who have permitted themselves to be hurt in their faith by the experience of loss in the material things of life, and often by nothing worse than damage to their comfort. Often they have been blind to the vast amount of privilege they still enjoyed as compared with hosts of God's other children. They did not seem to see that their fear of the loss of personal comfort, and even of such comfort for those dependent upon them, betrayed a woeful lack of courage in those who are bidden to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ." How petty it is for such people to visit their spite upon religious institutions, to give up coming to church, to give up belief in religion, to begin to sneer at God's ministers because, forsooth, life is not so comfortable for them as they have tried to make it!

Others, who all their lives had been spending their ingenuity safeguarding their own interests, were unable to see that it was a supreme blessing they had been brought to the end of their resources and face to face with the opportunity of learning how really to trust in God at last. The Christian man is not here to rival the worldling in worldly success. His main business in life is to further the prospects of the kingdom of God, and he can hardly expect the free and full guidance of God until he is dedicated to that purpose.

The last thing, however, that this contention means is that spiritual guidance is only for great preachers and missionaries and church workers. The supreme need of the kingdom of God at this time, as in all times, is for carpenters who are sons of God, fishermen who are ambassadors of the divine love, obscure and ordinary lives which are great for God in their obscurity and ordinariness.

ROOM FOR GOD.

But if this is to be our experience we must see to it that we make room for God in our thought and life. We must develop our sensitiveness towards him by a more constant practice of communion, and we must remember the importance of giving him time, time to make his impression upon us and time to effect his adjustment of circumstances. Doubtless it takes God time to do things, especially if it involves the moving of other minds in accordance with their free consent.

F. W. Boreham in one of his essays tells the story of a minister who was seeking guidance upon a certain action. A telegram containing a decision had to be despatched at a definite hour. Holding to his conviction that he must give God time up to the last moment, the minister walked to the Post Office without having come to any decision. As he was stepping into the office, a friend rode up on a bicycle, dropped into conversation with him, and incidentally passed on to him an item of information which settled the whole question and pointed straight to one decision.

Can we trust God for the last moment? Can we hold our mind calm, quiet, strong in trustfulness in the face of imminent danger and difficulty, instead of giving up in despair and flying to the expedients of panic? "He that believeth shall not make haste." To do this we must rise above two forms of fear, fear of God's silence and fear of a blunder. If God chooses to be silent, what then? Cannot we trust his silence as much as his speech? "Perfect love casteth out fear." Such silence doubtless means either that we have already in our possession all the material for discovering the right answer if we will diligently use our minds, or that any decision we make will be used by the providence of God for the furtherance of the holy purpose which is common to him and to us. And if we should blunder, cannot his providence overrule? No genuine action of ours taken in faith and with a pure desire for God's will can work us or anyone ultimate harm.

"For behind the dim Unknown
Standeth God within the shadows,
Keeping watch above his own."

(Next month: The Unceasing Prayer of the Devoted Life.)

GOD'S USE OF ORDINARY PEOPLE.*

Rev. James Gordon Gilkey.

In discussing Christian faith with young folks today, if you are successful in proving to them the reality of God, the goodness of God and the power of God, you will find very often that these boys and girls will say to you:

"Oh, well, that is all right! I can understand that if I were an exceptional person God could make some fine and wonderful use of my life. The trouble with me, however, is that I am a very ordinary person. Can I believe that God will make anything out of me when I am so ordinary?"

I believe God will make some significant use of my life, granted that I am only an ordinary person. That is the subject I want to take up this morning, and if you press down into the life and thought of modern young people you will find it is a problem with a great many of them.

Suppose we grant frankly that practically every one of us has to live an insignificant and ordinary life. I find that is the way to begin with young people who are troubled by the sense of their insignificance. I say to them, "Certainly you are insignificant! All of us are. That is one of the problems of modern life."

One effect of modern industrialism has been to increase this sense of personal insignificance. As I talk with young men and women who have just gone into business and industrial positions I find that they are almost overwhelmed with the sense of their insignificance. They would like to believe that God would make something out of their lives, but the tragic fact is that they find themselves so overwhelmed by the greatness of our modern industrial order that they cannot believe that out of such an insignificant life as theirs God will bring anything splendid.

Here is a very impressive passage from an article that appeared in "The Survey":

"When I was a little girl my father took me to a great factory where table silverware is made. The memory of most of the processes has faded from my mind, but

there persists the picture of a grey-haired man on a high stool, bent over a table. A row of silver forks lay at his left hand. One after another he took them up, worked on the handles with some tiny tool, and then put them down in a row at his right. Another man came with a tray and more forks, arranged them carefully at the left of the grey-haired man, and then carried the finished ones away. The guide whispered to me, 'That man is putting the pattern on the handles. Watch him!' And sure enough, a delicate little stem curved up the left side of the fork and around the top, with tiny cut-in blossoms and curving tendrils. The guide continued, 'That man is quite deaf, or at least he never notices what people say. We used to take him off this pattern, but he never did any other quite so well, so now we just keep him on this one. He has been doing it for forty years, fork after fork for forty years.'"

That is the insignificance of individual lives caught in the machinery of modern industries! It is no wonder that so many boys and girls come to us and say, "God may be able to do something with exceptional people, but what can he make out of me in my little life hidden away off in some inconspicuous corner of a world too vast for any measure?" There is our problem. How are we going to meet it?

We can say frankly to these young people: "Insignificance does not prevent the development of a splendid character."

Granted that this man may have been working on the handles of forks for forty years, granted that they are insignificant from our point of view, God can make out of them splendid characters.

To my mind that is one of the encouraging things about the life of Jesus. Have you ever considered the hopeless insignificance of Jesus Christ as viewed by his contemporaries? There he was, born in an out-of-the-way corner of the Roman empire, speaking a dialect that people scarcely know anything about today, so insignificant in his life that if you take out of the world the New Testament you will find scarcely six sentences in all Roman literature referring to Jesus Christ, executed

* Northfield Foreign Missions Conference.

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at thirty-three by a pagan official, and hurried away into a hasty grave. There is an insignificant life par excellence. But see! Out of that life came the most superb character and personality of history.

We can at least say this to our discouraged young friends: Granted that you do not make much of an impression on Boston, New York, Chicago, or any other place, at the same time, wherever you are and whatever you are, God can make a splendid character out of you.

That is the first great message of courage, it seems to me, that comes from Christian faith. God's power to make a fine character is not conditioned by our eminence or our lack of it in the modern world.

Do you know Joyce Kilmer's poem about "Martin"?

When I am tired of earnest men,
Intense and keen and sharp and clever,
Pursuing fame with brush or pen,
Or counting metal discs forever,
Then from the halls of shadow land
Beyond the trackless purple sea
Old Martin's ghost comes back to stand
Beside my desk and talk to me.

Some people ask: What cruel chance
Made Martin's life so sad a story?
Martin? Why, he exhaled romance,
And wore an overcoat of glory!
A fleck of sunshine in the street,
A horse, a book, a girl who smiled,—
Such visions made each moment sweet
For this receptive, ancient child.

Because it was old Martin's lot
To be, not make, a decoration,
Shall we then scorn him, having not
His genius of appreciation?
Rich joy and love he got and gave;
His heart was merry as his dress.
Pile laurel leaves upon his grave
Who did not gain, but was, success!

It is quite time for Christian people to get back to a realization that in the estimate of God success is a very different thing from what it is in the estimate of a commercial and money-mad world. What is Jesus' estimate of success? Is it money? "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things that he possesseth." Is it social prominence? "Many that are first shall be last, and the last first." Is it power? "He that would be greatest among you, let him be the servant of all!" Let us be frank with each other on that point! Success according to the world means money, power, social position. Success according to Jesus

Christ means not one of those things. You cannot reconcile the two points of view. They are different, and some of the people who are counted the world's greatest successes will make a mighty poor impression when they are put up against Jesus' standard of significance and value in life.

There is the second thing we can say to discouraged young people. Insignificance does not prevent the development of a splendid character. And there is God's estimate of success: not what you have, but what you are.

We can also go on and tell young people that God will use insignificant men and women in highly significant ways. He will make extraordinary uses out of ordinary lives.

If you go back to Christian origins you will find that has been one of the great sources of strength in Christian belief all through the years. Listen to Paul: "Ye behold, brethren, that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God chose the foolish things of this world that he might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of this world that he might put to shame the things that are strong; and the base things of this world, the things that are despised, them did God choose, yea, and the things that are not, that he might bring to nought the things that are."

If you want to realize what that meant when it was first spoken or written, picture to yourself a group of slaves or underlings in the Roman world, oppressed, crushed under, taught over and over again that they amounted to nothing; and then watch those men as they heard some one stand up and say, "God chose people just like you to remake his world: not working through the great folk of the Roman empire, but through insignificant slaves and poor people just like you."

That is a message that has almost disappeared from Christian pulpits today. We get into the habit of appealing to rich people, to people who have a lot of money, a lot of ability, a lot of power. Unconsciously we adapt our message to the people who are and the people who have. And time and again people who have not and people who are pretty insignificant go away from church feeling, "Well, what does all

this amount to in my life? I haven't money. I haven't ability." It is time for us all to get back and realize that God chose not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble, but ordinary people like you and me, and from our lives he is going to bring the new world.

HOW GOD USES PEOPLE.

Now let me point out three or four ways in which God does it, the ways in which God uses insignificant people.

First, God makes them a quiet and a personal influence for good.

If you look down into your life to find what the power is that is helping you most today, you find it is not someone's finely drawn argument, it is not someone's logical presentation of philosophy or religion. No. It is the memory of some person in whom the Christian virtues became incarnate,—your mother, your father, ordinary people. Virtue and Christian faith incarnate in them have become in you the greatest force for good in your life. God works through people, not through arguments.

What was Jesus' first appeal to the men who listened to him? Was it, "Follow my teaching, follow my arguments, follow my logic"? No: it was, "Follow me!" What is the greatest influence that your mother put into your life? Some elaborate argument that she worked up to prove her faith? Oh, no! It was her personality. That is the way God works through ordinary people.

Louis XI of France married Margaret of Provence, the fairest maid in all his kingdom, and inside his wedding ring he engraved three words: "God, France, Margaret,"—the three forces for good in his life, the living God, his country, the woman who summed up for him all the noble and beautiful things in life.

What use does God make of ordinary people? He makes their personality, not their arguments, a silent, all-pervasive force for good.

Of the thousand-odd delegates that are at this conference there are probably a great many of you who feel your life has been a flat failure. You have not written any book, you have not accumulated any money. Life is going down into insignificance in the hour of sunset and evening star. Has God

made anything out of you? Oh, remember, your life will live on in the lives of those you have touched, and some day they will rise up and call you blessed!

Secondly, God uses ordinary people to meet the concrete needs of the men and women about them.

If you will pardon me, I would like to tell a story about the community house that my own church is running.

Some years ago a workman and his wife moved to Springfield from Worcester. Things went well in that little family for a while, but last spring something very tragic happened. The man gave evidences of mental trouble, and one night, to his wife's horror, he suddenly attacked her, and before she could escape from the house he had almost murdered her. She called in the police and the doctors. The man was adjudged insane and committed to one of our asylums in Massachusetts, but before the police and the attendants at the asylum could come and get him, something again very tragic happened. He was seated in the front room in his house when an ambulance drove up the street and stopped in front of our community house, which is next door, to ask directions. He thought this ambulance had come for him, and with a sudden yell he dashed out of the house, escaped through the back door, and disappeared completely. Imagine the plight of his wife, left with four little children, and not a penny with which to pay the bills!

The different charitable agencies in Springfield took hold of the case. Our Union Relief Association paid the rent, our community house gave free lunches every day to the three older children, and the day nursery took care of the eight-months-old baby. But where was the money coming from to buy winter clothes? There was a problem. This woman went out to do washing and housework three days a week, she took in box laundries at her house to earn what she could in that way the rest of the time. But you know that is not enough to bring up a family of four hungry children. How was she going to buy winter clothing for those children?

I told this story in my pulpit on Christmas Sunday. The next day two letters came to me. The first was an anonymous letter with a five dollar bill inside, saying, "Won't you

take this and buy an overcoat for the little boy you talked about yesterday?" The other letter read this way: "Will you please take the money that daddy gave me for being on the honor roll at high school, and help the poor family you told about this morning? I am sorry I have only got two dollars left, but perhaps that will buy a sweater."

How does God use ordinary people? By putting into their hearts and minds impulses for kindness and sacrifice that by and by will work out in action and meet the concrete needs of tired, discouraged, disheartened people everywhere.

That is the romance of preaching, that through you God may possibly speak to some of the folks that are listening! God is speaking through you to them, and perhaps some one of them will respond to the voice that comes through you to them, and that person yielding to an impulse for kindness that God has put into their hearts through you, will be able to meet the tragic need of some of the least of these his brethren.

Do you know these magnificent words of Dr. Coffin:

"Some thoughts from God, old and new, will knock at my door today. Duties that he has sent will come and call upon me. Opportunities of his arranging will wait for me. Let me go out into life open-eyed, open-eared, open-hearted! God himself is looking for me. I may overtake him in the disguise of the commonplace. I may fail to recognize him, but God is on the lookout for me. Let me try to have Christ's vision, Christ's insight, Christ's understanding, yes, Christ's responsiveness!"

Would any of you dare go alone by yourselves for about five minutes and say to yourselves, "What is it that God is trying to get me to do to meet the need of some of the poor folk right around me? How is he trying to use me to meet the need of tired children, discouraged friends, boys and girls who want to find a faith but cannot decide what it is?" God is on the watch for you. That is the way he is trying to use your life.

God uses ordinary people, again, to redirect the course of younger lives.

A good many years ago, I think about twenty, a little boy drifted into a Sunday school on Twelfth Avenue in New York. He



Winter loveliness in Northfield.

was about the toughest specimen that that Sunday school had ever seen. They asked him for his name. He gave it. They asked him for his address, and he said, "Twelfth Avenue." They said, "Who are your parents?" He shrugged his shoulders. A typical waif off the streets! There were four others like him, but not quite so bad.

The superintendent of that Sunday school, who told me this story, went around in that church in New York to find some woman who would come in and do her best for those unpromising and tough kids. Well, you know the answers that are always given. "I would love to do it, but I am too busy." "Too busy; couldn't think of it! I have enough responsibility."

By and by, after two or three months, the superintendent found in that church a seamstress, a woman living down on Tenth Avenue, terribly poor, earning her own living by sewing, thoroughly exhausted at the end of the day. Somehow the appeal of those boys came to her as the challenge of God himself, and she said, "I will try it." And so she began.

Well, she had a real time the first Sunday. The prefaces all disappeared out of the hymn books and the Bibles, and appeared again as spitballs that went flying around the room with uncanny marksmanship. So it went for three or four months, but then this boy who gave such little promise at

first began to respond to her friendship and her love.

One day he came to her and said: "I have about decided to try to work my way through night school."

"Good for you!" she said. "You can do it!"

After he had gone through night school he came and said: "Do you think I could get through Columbia?"

"Why, of course you could!"

And so he went through Columbia. After he had finished at Columbia he came to her, —and by this time she was a very old lady, —and he said: "Do you think I could make my way through P. and S.,—the College of Physicians and Surgeons?"

"I think you could."

And so he went through. At the end of his course he heard a missionary say that there was great need down in Porto Rico for someone who would go there and parallel the work that Dr. Grenfell is doing in Labrador. Those words came as the challenge of the Almighty to that young man. So he gave his life to medical missions.

When this story was told me in New York some years ago, that boy was back in New York raising the last hundred thousand dollars for a big hospital, and reporting that he and his staff had given free treatment to 15,000 cases the year before in Porto Rico.

Look at the two ends of that story: A man who is remaking the life of an island, and at the other end of the story a waif coming off Twelfth Avenue and saying he did not know who his father and mother were. What is between them? An ordinary woman whose heart God touched. God hath chosen the weak things of this world, the things that are not, to bring to nought the things that are.

Here is one thing more. God uses ordinary people in great numbers to change the very life of the world.

Look back a few thousand years in the history of the world, and what do you find? Take this magnificent passage from Mr. Wells' "Outline of History":

"English uplands in the twilight of a midsummer morning. The torches pale in the growing light. One has a dim apprehension of a procession marching through an avenue of Druid stones, of priests fan-

tastically dressed with skins and horns and horrible painted masks, of chiefs adorned with necklaces of teeth, their great heads of hair held up by pins of bone, . . . of a great, peering crowd of shock-headed men and naked children. And amidst the throng march the appointed human victims, submissive, helpless, staring toward the distant smoking altar at which they are to die, that the crops may be good and the tribe increase. England, three thousand years ago!"

What brought us out of that? The combined effort of ten thousand times ten thousand people just like you and me, men who tried to interpret the truth of the living God, mothers who laid down their lives for their children, teachers, scientists, thinkers, reformers, all of us gathered together in one united army, carrying the world forward: What is going to bring us out of the horror of war, out of the tragedy of child labor, out of the agony of the slums, out of industrial injustice? What is going to do it? No single leader: the world has got too big for that. No half dozen leaders: the world is too complex. The one thing that can do it is the mingled life and idealism and sacrifice of common folk the world over, men and women like you and me, ordinary, every one of us, but whose hearts God has touched.

"The healing of the world is in its nameless saints. Each separate star means nothing, but a myriad scattered stars break up the night and make it beautiful." Think of that tonight when you look at the sky, "A myriad scattered stars break up the night and make it beautiful." What is finer than to be one little star for God shining with unnumbered other stars to break up the night of a dark and hideously unChristian world and bring in the light and the life of Jesus Christ?

Now I know perfectly well what a lot of you are thinking in your hearts. "Oh, well, that is all right in theory, but if you knew my life and knew into what a little corner fate has driven me, you would not have any illusions about what God can make out of a person like me!"

What are you going to say to that? You can only appeal to the experience of the generations. Do you think that God will be through with you at the time you pass from

this life to the next? Oh, no. He has only begun with you, for your influence has been put into life, and God is going to start with it as soon as he gets it, and he is going to keep on forever.

At the time of the American revolution a poor woman by the name of Mrs. Newton was dying in an underground hovel in London. She had only one son, a profligate wretch by the name of John Newton. At the very time of his pious mother's death he was off on a wild debauch. She died in utter despair, thinking that her life, her prayers, her efforts had been wasted, for was not the only boy that she had brought into the world half drunk at the time she was dying? But long after she was gone the memory of her love and prayers brought that boy to himself. He became one of the great preachers of his generation in England. Under his ministry a young man by the name of Thomas Scott was won to Jesus Christ. Thomas Scott in turn was the means of winning to Christ William Cowper, the English poet. About a century and a quarter ago William Cowper wrote a little book called "The Evidences of Christianity." It attained tremendous vogue in the English-speaking world of his day. About the year 1805 a young fellow of tremendous wealth and ability was traveling through Italy, and went into the reading room of a hotel, and saw Cowper's book on the table. He took it up and began to read. It fascinated him. He read for two hours, and then as he closed the volume he said:

"I am through with this life of ease! I am going back to England to throw myself into the task of social reform, building a better world."

William Wilberforce was won for Jesus Christ by the influence of that book. And so he went back to England, and took up single-handed the task of freeing the slaves of Great Britain. Oh, what a struggle it was for thirty long years, but at last before he died he saw every slave in the British Empire free! Why, that was a struggle that cost us a million men in the Civil War! We did not get freedom for the colored people here for thirty years after that. He brought it about in England single-handed without the shedding of a drop of human blood.

There you have at one end of the story

Will You Be God's Messenger?

REV. HOWARD W. POPE.

God's messages come thick and fast,
And I must seize them, while they last,
And pass them on to other hearts,
Which is a faithful servant's part;
And God has many things to say
To his dear children day by day:
For each one needs some word of cheer
To brighten hope or lessen fear.

For some poor hearts are very sad,
Who with our help could be made glad;
And some good souls are full of doubt,
Who, if enlightened, soon would shout.
Young people wish to know their work,—
For they have no desire to shirk,—
And how they best can serve the Lord,
And where be trained to use his Word.

Make friends of children when you can,
For each boy soon will be a man!
He will be sorely tempted too,
So you should tell him what to do.
And each dear girl may some day be
The center of a family,
And she needs counsel you can give,
To show her how she ought to live.

Remember that all classes need
A messenger who can succeed,—
Succeed in making others see
How precious Jesus Christ can be!
So make your life a lighthouse bright
To guide the toilers of the night,
And point the lost into the way
Which leads to everlasting day!

thousands of colored people kneeling down to thank God for freedom, and at the other end of the story what do you have? A mother dying in a hovel in London, feeling that life was a failure and God's promises all in vain. Mrs. Newton, John Newton, Cowper, William Wilberforce, and then the freeing of a world!

Now unto him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly even with people like us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus! We are not working in vain. Through us God is bringing in his new world.

Next Month.

Dr. J. D. Jones, "Whence Art Thou?"
Rev. A. D. Belden, The Unceasing
Prayer of the Devoted Life.

Dr. John Gardner, What is Salvation?
Do Men Need It?

Dr. Wm. Hiram Foulkes, More to be
Desired than Gold: The Word of God.

Dr. F. W. Norwood, Jesus at the Feet
of His Disciples.

And others.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EXEGESIS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT: MENTAL DISCIPLINE THROUGH PRAYER.*

Professor Norman E. Richardson, D. D.

THE DISCIPLINE OF GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS.

Present-day social and economic conditions make the discipline of meditation upon God, as well as of silence and of desire, difficult to achieve. The splendid emphasis which many religious leaders are placing upon social relationships and social welfare has sometimes resulted in an unconscious neglect of the culture of personal religion except on its service side. The social message of Christianity is greatly needed, but there should go with it a correspondingly emphatic devotional emphasis. There is too little clear thinking concerning the fundamentals of our faith and deep realization of the presence of God. Even religious workers are being sent forth equipped with beliefs and experiences that seem never to become more explicit than "a vague feeling about God, half instinct, half superstition." When purely religious motives are feeble, unstable, intermittent, and firsthand knowledge of God is lacking, social service is apt to become hackneyed.

Morality cannot live by its own sustenance. It is not self-sufficient. The individual, who in response to a controlled social environment improves his method of making social adjustments, is not thereby necessarily becoming increasingly religious. Good manners are not a substitute for prayer. Moral knowledge needs to be energized, lighted up, by those emotions that flow only from God-consciousness, before it can stand the strain of our modern life. Our moral ideals must have their setting in a spiritual universe before they can permanently subdue the self-centered tendencies of original human nature and the false customs of modern society.

Prayerful meditation helps one to realize the moral integrity of God. It knits together the various scattered interests of life. It helps one to see things as they are in God's world. At stated intervals a scout-master, taking a troop of scouts on a long hike, gathers all together and counts them

one by one, to make sure that no straggler is missing. To lose one boy would destroy the integrity of the troop. Similarly, the mind needs to bring all of its interests together at times, the new and the old, the important and the unimportant, thus making sure that no impulses are being misdirected and that no inconsistent interests are endangering the moral integrity of the whole self.

Prayer, then, is more than lonely, desireful meditation upon moral ideals. It is thinking things over WITH GOD. Not infrequently we take our most perplexing problems to a friend and ask for the privilege of "going over them" with him. And how often the solution of the vexed question appears even while the various items are being stated for our friend's comprehension and before he has given his opinion! His immediate presence has contributed something to our intellectual insight or our sense of values. Meditation with him has been more lucid, more direct, better poised, than it could have been without him. Meditation with another of superior judgment is like looking at a picture through a stereoscope. Binocular lenses give perspective, depth, naturalness.

There are two focal points in the prayer of meditation. One is God, the other is self. A distinct type of self-consciousness is realized. What has been described as the "accessories of personality" are laid aside. It is not the self functioning and with acquired characteristics, but the real self,—that which has functioned or that which is to function, to which attention is now directed. Hocking refers to prayer as "a flight from the alone to the alone." In prayer we seek the self of the world.

It is instinctive that one individual coming into the presence of another assumes appropriate attitudes in view of the character and station of the latter. The social or gregarious tendencies cause us to modify our personal bearing to suit the existing situation. A boy in the presence of the minister—the two being alone,—is noticeably different from the boy in the midst of his gang.

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"Company manners" differ from conduct in the secluded kitchen. A student in the presence of his teacher, especially if the assigned work has been neglected, may appear humble or penitent, and five minutes later in the midst of his fraternity group he may assume attitudes not even remotely suggestive of these.

In the presence of God we have a natural tendency to think the thoughts which we assume God would have us think. The frequent repetition of the exercise of prayer tends to establish godly desires, beliefs, memories and attitudes in one's mind. When the psalmist prayed, "Let the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer!" he opened an interesting chapter on the psychology of prayer.

Under such conditions as are found in prayer there is a tendency to recollect one's own former religious experiences that have been particularly vivid or meaningful. Or attention may be turned for the moment toward the classic examples of men who through prayer have lifted life into harmony with God's will. The prayer of meditation often becomes the prayer of thanksgiving. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits!" prays the psalmist. Then follows a series of references that clearly point to past experiences wherein the hand of Jehovah had been revealed. The traveler looking across a series of mountain ridges sees only the high peaks and plateaus: the valleys lie below his line of vision. Likewise with memory: the high points in the past religious life are recalled when one is in the immediate presence of God.

But this power of recollection includes emotions as well as ideas. It is not only what was thought, but also how one felt in the former experiences, that is now brought to mind. Hence the concentration, or we might almost say the condensation of emotion, which is frequently found in prayer. The meditative prayer that is also reflective is a distinct means of mental control, because through it emotional elements that are religiously significant are intensified. They are organized, more or less permanently, around certain religious ideals which are thereby made more dynamic.

But this is not all. Whenever an emotion is dominant, as was stated above, it tends to "draw into its system" ideas that are appropriate in view of its own nature. This law applies to acquired as well as to instinctive emotions. When an individual deliberately sets aside time for prayerful meditation, and thereby creates a mental condition in which religious emotions are dominant, he will have ideals concerning his own religious nature and relationships which otherwise could not have been entertained. He now holds "over-beliefs" with respect to himself and others, beliefs which he could not have held had it not been for prayer.

It is one of the distinct results of prayer that it creates a feeling of reality or of congruity for certain beliefs about the nature and will of God, about immortality, about the ultimate triumph of justice and righteousness, about the forgiveness of one's sins. It is easier to hold these beliefs. They are like the axioms of geometry. They seem to be true. God-consciousness makes one hospitable toward the truth as recorded in the Gospels. It helps one to see one's life as having been under the protective care of Providence, and with all things working together for good.

In his presence we tend spontaneously to cherish those memories, to think those thoughts, to cultivate those desires, which are appropriate in view of our belief concerning his character and attitude. As we think our past experiences over with God, memory is distinctly selective. Since God is transcendent, and since we believe that we partake of his nature, through prayer the center of our personalities is lifted. We adjust ourselves to his attitudes, we think his thoughts, we resolve to do his will, we feel his life within our own.

The individual who approaches God through prayer for the purpose of receiving not advice but confirmation, is in great danger of making more dynamic or forceful those very tendencies that should be curbed. Prayerful meditation cannot yield its maximum of moral control unless it is offered in a spirit of teachableness and humility. Of the two men who went up to the Temple to pray (Luke 18. 10), one sought divine sanction of his Pharisaism. He wanted God to ratify his egotism. And he went his way convinced that his prayer

had been answered. If an individual is incapable of self-depreciation or of self-effacement, if he is lacking in receptivity or educability, prayer, instead of yielding greater control, may result in a lessened ability to profit morally by talking things over with God. A man who deliberately carries selfish, egotistical sentiments and attitudes into the very presence of God and expects divine confirmation, needs to be taught what the word insult means. If a man's self-confidence and self-interest crowd God-consciousness aside even in the place of prayer, let not that man expect to reap the benefits of prayer!

It was Lord Chesterfield who suggested that a gentleman upon meeting a friend would not presume to tell a story, for in telling the story he assumes that he has the right to monopolize time that otherwise might be given to profitable conversation. Prayerful meditation is more of the nature of conversation than of monologue. Awareness of the immediate presence and attention of God should make one ready to find God's point of view as well as to present one's own.

It is through meditative prayer—prayer that means a quickening of the intellectual powers,—that life is rescued from aimless endeavor or pious absorption that is morally impotent. Prayer is not romantic piety. It is an experience in which truth is recognized and reality located. Through prayer the individual receives God's approval of desires and loyalties that place upon his shoulders his fair share of the burden of redeeming society from ignorance, poverty, disease, and sin. It creates strength that is to be shared with the weak, wisdom that is

to be shared with the ignorant, health to be shared with those who are ill. It was said of the Man of prayer that he saved others, himself he could not save. A passion for the furthering of the social process is aroused in the heart of him who through prayer shares with his Lord the vision of the kingdom of God.

SUMMARY.

Our study of prayer as mental discipline might be summarized in the following brief statements:

In order to achieve an act of prayer certain mental conditions must be fulfilled.

The mind that is so lacking in self-control that it cannot achieve silence will have great difficulty in realizing God and those attributes of God which through prayer can be built into human personality.

Prayer is aspiration in its purest and loftiest form. The basic desires of life, expressed with the approval of God, bring freedom and victory.

Going into silence with God makes possible an intercommunication which purifies one's life and makes it possible to share the life of God. Two persons who enjoy social intimacy tend to become like each other.

To have a mind so disciplined that the prayer experience can be achieved at will, is to fortify oneself against weakness and defeat, and to join the ranks of God's living witnesses. The practice of prayer is a mental discipline through which one becomes capable of thinking God's thoughts, feeling God's motives, and doing God's will.

(Other addresses in this series: Psychology of Modern Mysticism; Dynamic Elements in Worship.)

SHALL WE COMMIT SUICIDE?

The Rt. Hon. Winston S. Churchill.

The story of the human race is war. Except for brief and precarious interludes, there has never been peace in the world.

Before history began, murderous strife was universal and unending. But up to the present time the means of destruction at the disposal of man have not kept pace with his ferocity. Reciprocal extermination was impossible in the stone age. One cannot do much with a clumsy club. Besides, men

were so scarce and hid so well that they were hard to find. They fled so fast that they were hard to catch. Human legs could only cover a certain distance each day. With the best will in the world to destroy his species, each man was restricted to a very limited area of activity. It was impossible to make any effective progress on these lines. Meanwhile one had to live and hunt and sleep. So on the balance the life-forces

kept a steady lead over the forces of death, and gradually tribes, villages and governments were evolved.

The effort at destruction then entered upon a new phase. War became a collective enterprise. Roads were made which facilitated the movement of large numbers of men. Armies were organized. Many improvements in the apparatus of slaughter were devised. In particular the use of metal, and above all steel, for piercing and cutting human flesh, opened out a promising field. Bows and arrows, slings, chariots, horses, and elephants lent a valuable assistance. But here again another set of checks began to operate. The governments were not sufficiently secure. The armies were liable to violent internal disagreements. It was extremely difficult to feed large numbers of men once they were concentrated and consequently the efficiency of the efforts at destruction became fitful and was tremendously hampered by defective organization. Thus again there was a balance on the credit side of life. The world rolled forward, and human society entered upon a vaster and more complex age.

It was not until the dawn of the 20th century of the Christian era that war really began to enter into its kingdom as the potential destroyer of the human race. The organization of mankind into great states and empires and the rise of nations to full collective consciousness enabled enterprises of slaughter to be planned and executed upon a scale and with a perseverance never before imagined. All the noblest virtues of individuals were gathered together to strengthen the destructive capacity of the mass. Good finances, the resources of worldwide credit and trade, the accumulation of large capital reserves, made it possible to divert for considerable periods the energies of whole peoples to the task of devastation. Democratic institutions gave expression to the will power of millions. Education not only brought the course of the conflict within the comprehension of everyone, but rendered each person serviceable in a high degree for the purpose in hand. The press afforded a means of unification and of mutual encouragement. Religion, having discreetly avoided conflict on the fundamental issues, offered its encouragements and consolations through all its forms

impartially to all the combatants. Lastly, science unfolded her secrets to the desperate demands of men and placed in their hands agencies and apparatus almost decisive in their character.

In consequence many novel features presented themselves. Instead of merely starving fortified towns, whole nations were methodically subjected, or sought to be subjected, to the process of reduction by famine. The entire population in one capacity or another took part in the war: all were equally the object of attack. The air opened paths along which death and terror could be carried far behind the lines of the actual armies to women, children, the aged, the sick, who in earlier struggles would perforce have been left untouched. Marvellous organization of railroads, steamships, and motor vehicles placed and maintained tens of millions of men continuously in action. Healing and surgery in their exquisite developments returned them again and again to the shambles. Nothing was wasted that could contribute to the process of waste. The last dying kick was brought into military utility.

But all that happened in the four years of the great war was only a prelude to what was preparing for the fifth year. The campaign of the year 1919 would have witnessed an immense accession to the power of destruction. Had the Germans retained the morale to make good their retreat to the Rhine, they would have been assaulted in the summer of 1919 with forces and by methods incomparably more prodigious than any yet employed. Thousands of aeroplanes would have shattered their cities. Scores of thousands of cannon would have blasted their front. Arrangements were being made to carry simultaneously a quarter of a million men, together with all their requirements, continuously forward across country in mechanical vehicles moving 10 or 15 miles each day. Poison gases of incredible malignity, against which only a secret mask (which the Germans could not obtain in time,) was proof, would have stifled all resistance and paralyzed all life on the hostile front subjected to attack. No doubt the Germans, too, had their plans. But the hour of wrath had passed. The signal of relief was given, and the horrors of 1919

remain buried in the archives of the great antagonists.

The war stopped as suddenly and as universally as it had begun. The world lifted its head, surveyed the scene of ruin, and victors and vanquished alike drew breath. In a hundred laboratories, in a thousand arsenals, factories and bureaus, men pulled themselves up with a jerk, turned from the task in which they had been absorbed. Their projects were put aside unfinished, unexecuted, but their knowledge was preserved; their data, calculations, and discoveries were hastily bundled together and docketed for future reference by the war offices in every country. The campaign of 1919 was never fought, but, its ideas go marching along. In every army they are being explored, elaborated, refined under the surface of peace, and should war come again to the world it is not with the weapons and agencies prepared for 1919 that it will be fought, but with developments and extensions of these which will be incomparably more formidable and fatal.

It is in these circumstances that we have entered upon that period of exhaustion which has been described as peace. It gives us, at any rate, an opportunity to consider the general situation. Certain somber facts emerge, solid, inexorable, like the shapes of mountains from drifting mist.

It is established that henceforward whole populations will take part in war, all doing their utmost, all subjected to the fury of the enemy.

It is established that nations who believe their life is at stake will not be restrained from using any means to secure their existence.

It is probable—nay, certain,—that among the means which will next time be at their disposal will be agencies and processes of destruction wholesale, unlimited, and perhaps, once launched, uncontrollable.

Mankind has never been in this position before. Without having improved appreciably in virtue or enjoying wiser guidance, it has got into its hands for the first time the tools by which it can unfailingly accomplish its own extermination. That is the point in human destinies to which all the glories and toils of men have at last led them. They would do well to pause and ponder upon their new responsibilities. Death

stands at attention, obedient, expectant, ready to serve, ready to shear away the peoples en masse; ready, if called on, to pulverize without hope of repair what is left of civilization. He awaits only the word of command. He awaits it from a frail, bewildered being, long his victim, now—for one occasion only,—his master.

Let it not be thought for a moment that the danger of another explosion in Europe is passed. For the time being the stupor and the collapse which followed the world war ensured a sullen passivity, and the horror of war, its carnage and its tyrannies, have sunk into the soul, have dominated the mind of every class and in every race. But the causes of war have been in no way removed: indeed, they are in some respects aggravated by the so-called peace treaty and the reactions following thereupon. Two mighty branches of the European family will never rest content with their existing situation. Russia, stripped of her Baltic provinces, will, as the years pass by, brood incessantly upon the wars of Peter the Great. From one end of Germany to the other an intense hatred of France unites the whole population. This passion is fanned continuously by the action of the French government. The enormous contingents of German youth growing to military manhood year by year are inspired by the fiercest sentiments, and the soul of Germany smoulders with dreams of a war of liberation or revenge. These ideas are restrained at the present moment only by physical impotence. France is armed to the teeth. Germany has been to a great extent disarmed and her military system broken up. The French hope to preserve this situation by their technical military apparatus, by their black troops, and by a system of alliances with the smaller states of Europe; and for the present at any rate overwhelming force is on their side. But physical force alone, unsustained by world opinion, affords no durable foundation for security. Germany is a far stronger entity than France, and cannot be kept in permanent subjugation.

"Wars," said a distinguished American to me last summer, "are fought with steel. Weapons may change, but steel remains the core of all modern warfare. France has got the steel of Europe, and Germany has

lost it. Here, at any rate, is an element of permanency."

"Are you sure," I asked, "that wars of the future will be fought with steel?"

A few weeks later I talked with a German.

"What about aluminium?" he replied. "Some think that the next war will be fought with electricity."

And on this a vista opens up of electrical rays which could paralyze the engines of a motor car, could claw down aeroplanes from the sky, and conceivably be made destructive of human life or human vision.

Then there are explosives. Have we reached the end? Has science turned its last page on them? May there not be methods of using explosive energy incomparably more intense than anything heretofore discovered? Might not a bomb no bigger than an orange be found to possess a secret power to destroy a whole block of buildings,—nay to concentrate the force of a thousand tons of cordite and blast a town-ship at a stroke? Could not explosives even of the existing type be guided automatically in flying machines by wireless or other rays, without a human pilot, in ceaseless procession upon a hostile city, arsenal, camp, or dockyard?

As for poison gas and chemical warfare in all its forms, only the first chapter has been written of a terrible book. Certainly every one of these new avenues to destruction is being studied on both sides of the Rhine, with all the science and patience of which man is capable.

And why should it be supposed that these resources will be limited to inorganic chemistry? A study of disease—of pestilences methodically prepared and deliberately launched upon man and beast,—is certainly being pursued in the laboratories of more than one great country. Blight to destroy crops, anthrax to slay horses and cattle, plague to poison not armies only but whole districts,—such are the lines along which military science is remorselessly advancing.

It is evident that whereas an equally contested war under such conditions might work the ruin of the world and cause an immeasurable diminution of the human race, the possession by one side of some overwhelming scientific advantage would lead to the complete enslavement of the

unwary party. Not only are the powers now in the hand of man capable of destroying the life of nations, but for the first time they afford to one group of civilized men the opportunity of reducing their opponents to absolute helplessness.

In the somber paths of destructive science there was one new turning-point which seemed to promise a corrective to these mortal tendencies. It might have been hoped that the electromagnetic waves would in certain scales be found capable of detonating explosives of all kinds from a great distance. Were such a process discovered in time to become common property, war would in important respects return again to the crude but healthy limits of the barbarous ages. The sword, the spear, the bludgeon, and above all the fighting man, would regain at a bound their old sovereignty. But it is depressing to learn that the categories into which these rays are divided are now so fully explored that there is not much expectation of this. All the hideousness of the explosive era will continue, and to it will surely be added the gruesome complications of poison and of pestilence scientifically applied.

Such, then, is the peril with which mankind menaces itself. Means of destruction incalculable in their effects, wholesale and frightful in their character, and unrelated to any form of human merit; the march of science unfolding ever more appalling possibilities, and the fires of hatred burning deep in the hearts of some of the greatest peoples of the world, fanned by continual provocation and unceasing fear, and fed by the deepest sense of national wrong or national danger! On the other hand, there is the blessed respite of exhaustion, offering to the nations a final chance to control their destinies and avert what may well be a general doom. Surely if a sense of self-preservation still exists among men, if the will to live resides not merely in individuals or nations but in humanity as a whole, the prevention of the supreme catastrophe ought to be the paramount object of all endeavor! —"Nash's Pall Mall Magazine."

No matter how well equipped he may be, the man who possesses a guilty conscience fights to disadvantage.

HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS!

Miss Annie Creelman.

We hear in these days of great movements and causes, of the work of prominent leaders and big institutions: it is interesting to get an occasional peep at what is being accomplished in sequestered spots far away from the great highways of human life and activity. Our attention is so much engrossed by the great religious movements that we know little of the forces set in motion by the quiet, earnest efforts of consecrated men and women, working in secluded corners of our native land.

A striking illustration of this is the work being done in the Appalachian region, where hundreds of men and women representing different churches are laboring, often with scant equipment and with few of the comforts of life to bring belated Americans up to higher social intellectual and spiritual levels.

At the beginning of 1923 there was called to his reward a man who for more than twenty years through summer rains and winter winds and snows traveled over the mountains, preaching the gospel, visiting the sick, and working in the cause of righteousness. At the same time he superintended a school for the training of young girls, and gave to more than a thousand young women higher ideals of Christian womanhood.

In another locality a woman of fine personality has for thirty years labored among the mountain people in remote sections, teaching them the value of handwork and encouraging them in the revival of the old-time crafts. In this way, as well as by inculcating high spiritual ideals, she has been a blessing to thousands who needed a guiding hand to better material and spiritual achievement.

I am thinking now of a lovely valley in the highland country of Georgia near the head waters of the Chattahoochee River, which rises in the Southern Appalachian region. This valley has long been famous for its romantic Indian legends, and relics of "the noble savage" are still to be found in the land. Poets have sung the charms of its mountains and streams; archeologists have visited it and published long reports of their findings, but the "human interest" stories that might be written of present day happenings in this delightful valley would

fill a good sized volume, and happy would be the writer who could properly distinguish between the charms of the modern "Vesper Hill" and those of the Indian dancing-ground.

On a rugged hillside overlooking the valley and facing picturesque mountain ridges stands a group of buildings of various sizes and styles of architecture, but all interesting to the visitor, for within them for three-fourths of the year are happy boys and girls, studying, working, worshipping, according to the hour of the day. Such is Nacoochee Institute, a school whose purpose it is to instil into its pupils the finest Christian ideals. Over two hundred and forty were enrolled last year, one hundred of these being boarding students and the others coming from the valley or neighboring villages.

Rev. John Knox Coit, the superintendent, is an enthusiast in the work of training young people. He is incurably optimistic in regard to the latent possibilities for good in boys and girls when given proper training and environment, and his opinion seems to be borne out by the fact that the Nacoochee graduates for 20 years have made good, many of them filling responsible positions in the business world and in religious work.

Nacoochee Institute stands for the all-around development of the boy or girl that comes to its doors. Their physical, mental, and spiritual well-being is considered, and no teacher may expect a place on its staff who is not something of an expert along one of these lines. The textbook and the course of study receive due attention, but the personality of the teacher has first consideration, and each one is chosen with great care and deliberation.

A day spent in viewing any one department of the work would give much food for reflection to the thoughtful mind. The Bible department is under the care of a graduate of the Biblical Seminary of New York City. The original charts and outlines constructed by the pupils are astonishing, "Bible Night" is a feature of the Commencement exercises.

A day in the office would reveal much of human interest. In his sanctum sanctorum the superintendent discusses with his helpers



Senior Class, 1924, Nacoochee Institute, Santee, Ga.

matters of importance in the school management. Here he talks with his boys about their problems, and possibly their failings. The typist is busy with her machine, and on some of her typed messages hangs the destiny of some needy little scrap of humanity.

The bookkeeper may be called from his ledger and cash books to decide whether he will purchase a half-gallon of strawberries from some little girl who has carried them three miles to exchange for second hand clothing that is sold in another part of the office, or he may dicker with a farmer who has come some distance over the purchase of a pair of chickens or a few potatoes.

Come with us to the Sunday school! Lo, our bookkeeper again, not with his ledger, but the efficient superintendent, with his Bible and program! Not quite all his week day time is given up to business. He is on the superintendent's job through the week as well, and as a result the Sunday school has reached the hundred per cent mark of efficiency. City visitors often express amazement at the interesting and varied exercises of the Sunday school session.

In addition to the central school there are three extension Sunday schools, manned by members of the faculty and students from the Institute. One of these has developed into a separate community work with a new building containing a school room and living rooms for the workers.

But we are wandering away from our course, and we have not yet visited Hoyt Home. It is a shabby little dormitory at the foot of the hill, and houses a number of little girls, who have no real home. Here they are mothered and trained in the things worthwhile, and are living happy, eager lives. Perhaps the most interesting hour for a visit here would be at eventide when the little ones gather for evening prayers, each phrasing her own petition in her own childish way.

A Christian philanthropist who has recently passed away made possible a splendid home for these little ones. "We must not fail to provide for these children of good Anglo-Saxon stock," he said, shortly before his death. And in accordance with his wishes his family have given for this work the old homestead, a fine large residence surrounded by beautiful grounds,—an ideal place for little children to live and grow strong in mind and body.

The opportunity remains for persons interested in Christian education to contribute towards a fund for the furnishing of this home. When this is done there will be one more added to the list of Nacoochee's attractions, and this perhaps the most interesting of all.

PERSONALIA.

A distinguished Christian Japanese slum worker, **Kagawa Toyohiko**, has been in this country for some time, in the

course of a nine-months' world tour at the invitation of the World Students' Christian Federation. After three months in America he intends to go to England, Germany, France, Italy, Egypt, Asia Minor and India.

Primarily it is a lecturing tour, but Mr. Kagawa will certainly use the opportunity of widening his knowledge. The Students' Christian Federation has asked him to take as his main theme "Christ as Seen by the Oriental Mind." In this connection he will naturally touch on exclusionism and racial discrimination, against which he has already expressed himself with some freedom. Addressing his own little congregation of the "Friends of Jesus" in Kobe, he said that he would talk quite as frankly in the United States as he did at home, though he did not expect what he said to be pleasing to some of his hearers.

Mr. Kagawa wrote a novel called "Across the Deathline," which has had an enormous circulation. It tells his own life story in part. He is 36 years old, and heard the gospel when he was 14, being baptized the following year. While at a theological seminary his health broke down with consumption, so he retired to a fishing village for a year, and was cured. Having thus "crossed the deathline" he decided to give his life to others.

Foreigners who became interested in his slum work in Kobe helped in his support, and sent him to Princeton Theological Seminary for two years, 1914-16.

Dr. Charles R. Erdman has been installed as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Princeton, N. J.

Gift Subscription Fund.

Contributions are invited to send this magazine free to missionaries, and in special cases. Many requests reach our office. Any sum, small or large, will be welcome.

18843..\$ 1 00	18844..\$ 3 00	18845..\$ 5 00
18846.. 2 00	18847.. 1 00	18848.. 3 00
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Receipts, Nov. 15 to Dec. 15.

Africa (Dan Crawford).

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British Syrian Mission,
Beyrout, Syria.

Dear Mr. Moody,

As a Society we have been favored for some time past by your sending us copies of the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK which are much valued by us, and for which we wish to send our sincere thanks. We find in them encouragement and stimulus, and coming as they do as a gift from your kind donors they bring with them a sense of fellowship which is very cheering. A copy always lies on our reception room table, where it meets the eye of our visitors and is often taken up while waiting there, and read.

One of my earliest recollections is of a visit of Mr. D. L. Moody to Glasgow in the '70s, when he and Mr. Sankey held a mission in my father's church. I was proud to share the pulpit once at a crowded Saturday children's meeting.

(Signed) M. L. Johnston.

Mr. Stebbins' "Reminiscences."

The evangelistic world of the past 50 years or more is called to life by the volume of reminiscences recently written by Mr. George C. Stebbins. For the last 20 years of D. L. Moody's career Mr. Stebbins was one of that group of evangelists and singers associated with Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey in campaigns all over this country and Great Britain: among whom may be named P. P. Bliss, Major Whittle, George F. Pentecost, James McGranahan, D. B. Towner. This is no formal tale, but Mr. Stebbins awakens memories by agreeable information and anecdotes that often give clear insight into the spiritual power vouchsafed to those leaders.

The book gives sketches of other leaders in gospel music who touched Mr. Stebbins' life, from Philip Phillips to E. O. Excell and Charles M. Alexander, and many a sidelight on the development of the composition and publication and use of the gospel song.

"Reminiscences and Gospel Hymn Stories" by George C. Stebbins is published at \$3. It can be bought at this price from the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK, or in combination with a year's subscription to our magazine, new or renewal, for \$4.

The everyday Christian has seven chances to the Sunday fellow's one.

OUR BOOK TABLE.

John Henry Jowett, by Arthur Porritt.

George H. Doran Co., New York. 304 pages, illustrated. \$2.50 net.

The writing of a biography is more than simply recording the events and achievements of a man's life. The annals of an active career may be of value as a book of reference, relating the subject to other lives and correlating it to the history of the times. But the true biography is far more than this. Rather, it should interpret the secret wellsprings of action and discover the secret forces of power and strength of personality. In some characters this is less difficult than in others. There are those whose personality one might say was displayed in the showcase for the perusal of any and all. Even some who have attained fame seem to owe their distinction to no secret forces, but to initiative and indomitable will power and knowledge of human nature. Again there are those other characters whose influence has been widely felt, but the secret of whose powers is not readily discerned. Such a one offers great difficulties to the biographer. And it is a task of just this difficult nature that Mr. Porritt has met in seeking to portray to the world the life of Dr. John Henry Jowett.

The narrative of his life is simple and easily told. He was a child in a godly family of Non-conformists, brought up to know neither luxury nor abject want. Provided, through the sacrifice of his parents, as well as through the rewards of his own industry, with the best educational privileges Great Britain had to afford. A ministry in Newcastle, Birmingham, New York and London. Such in brief outline constitutes the life story of Dr. Jowett.

But there are many others whose early surroundings have been similar, whose educational privileges have been the same, who have had even greater advantages in other regards. So it is not in either education or training that the source of strength was to be found which made John Henry Jowett the greatest preacher of his generation. Mr. Porritt has given the facts surrounding his life, but the book seems lacking in that critical examination or interpretation of his character. Perhaps it is too much to expect this, for the reasons assigned. The most elaborate and careful

analysis may utterly fail to adequately interpret spiritual resources, and it was essentially as a great spiritual force that Dr. Jowett will be remembered by his contemporaries. We would not seem to belittle his intellectual ability, his wide reading, and rare literary gifts. But more than all that there was developed in him to a large degree the quality of the mystic, finding in all that he saw spiritual analogies, and nature itself affording a rich fund of spiritual illustration.

But as a seer he was no less a reformer, and his feet were firmly planted upon this earth, if at times his vision seemed to be of things unseen. In Birmingham one of the great institutions which has wrought for righteousness in the slums of that great city owes its origin to Dr. Jowett's realization of the need of the church's interpreting its message in social terms. Digbeth Institute is a memorial to Dr. Jowett's sympathy with his Master in compassion for the multitudes whom he saw in his own city. Of the wisdom and practical character of this Christian effort there is the testimony of city officials, to the effect that the community in which this great work has been carried on has changed in character as a result of its ministry.

To many who never heard Dr. Jowett his name is familiar for his devotional writings, so simple in expression as to appeal to any, and yet so discerning as to be stimulating to the most spiritual.

But it is in the intimacies of close companionships that a man is really known. This is no less true of Dr. Jowett than others. To none was he greater than to those who knew him at close range. There is a term of disparagement sometimes used in speaking of a man as being of "a single-track mind." At the same time, singleness of purpose is an indication of strength. This was preëminently illustrated in Dr. Jowett. Dryden says, "He who has one end in mind makes all things bend." Or better still, St. Paul expresses his own consuming passion in life in one brief phrase, "For me, to live is Christ." Such might have been said of Dr. Jowett, and in his companionship there was always the consciousness of a life devoted to one great purpose. Not that this expressed itself in

any pietistic phraseology or sanctimonious spirit. His was too genuine a spirituality for any veneer.

His interests were wide, in politics, in literature, in art. In conversation he was as well an attentive listener as a well informed speaker. How he appreciated the pleasure of others in the conversation of some friend whom he admired! Again, he would love to share with a companion the beauty of some passage in a recent book as in some old favorite. His was a wonderfully richly stored mind. He had a large circle with whom he was on terms of warm friendship, and a smaller, still closer circle of friends with whom in close intimacy he conversed with the utmost freedom. In later years there was a deepening of spiritual growth, and an ever increasing consciousness of the immanence of God. This is seen in some of his last meditations, for he was among those rare souls that "abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

To those who knew Dr. Jowett with the privilege of close intimacy the real interpretation of his life is to be found in his writings, in which the beauty of his spirit is most clearly revealed.—X.

Great Preachers As Seen by a Journalist, by William G. Shepherd. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 190 pages. \$1.50.

Mr. Shepherd was commissioned by the "Christian Herald" to interview some of the leading preachers in America, men who represented different beliefs and methods, thus getting a cross section of pulpit life and work in America. Eleven were selected: Burrell, Cadman, Conwell, Fosdick, Jefferson, McConnell, Campbell Morgan, Stone, Straton, Reisner, Bishop Williams.

The articles are done with skill and acumen. Personal characteristics are hit off, as well as particulars of preaching and service.

The experience led Mr. Shepherd to the conviction that the Protestant churches have much in common, that the uselessness and pity of today's schisms and doctrinal differences will of themselves bring about a great consolidation.

Baron Paul Nicolay, by Greta Langenskiöld. George H. Doran Co., New York. 251 pages, illustrated. \$1.60 net.

This biography of one of the most distinguished Christian men of our own day in Russia has a charm of its own. Born of noble parents and in the enjoyment of all that rank and possessions could afford

of ease and luxury, Baron Nicolay early devoted himself and all his resources to the service of Christ. Moving in the old court circles, and having access to every sphere of interest and influence throughout Russia, he was enabled to take the gospel to many who, apart from his ministry, would probably never have heard it. And by a character of rare simplicity and beauty he commended what he proclaimed, and left an enduring record of Christian service which must be amongst the brightest annals of that now so sorely distressed country. Particularly amongst the student class were his labors blessed. The picture which this biography gives of a humble Christian gentleman, spending and being spent in the service of Christ and for the extension of his kingdom, is an inspiration indeed.

Very heartily and without reserve is this book commended to young men and women as a record which cannot fail to stimulate their own faith and zeal. For such a man as Baron Nicolay still speaks though dead.—J. S. H.

Charles Lemuel Thompson: An Autobiography, edited by Elizabeth Osborn Thompson. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 289 pages. \$2.50.

Dr. Charles L. Thompson was born in 1839, went to Princeton Theological Seminary in 1858 in the time of Charles Hodge, William Henry Green, and other giants, married and took a church in 1860, and died in 1924. This autobiography touches many religious high spots, not only in the Presbyterian church of which he was a successful minister during 63 years, but also in the broad field of home missions in which he was later a leader.

"If this book were a biography instead of an autobiography, one would feel compelled to criticize it," says Dr. John A. Marquis. "Dr. Thompson does not do himself justice as a leader of men. Only between the lines do we get a hint of the vast service he rendered the church of Christ and his fellow men. He was one of the great spiritual statesmen of his day. He conceived and inaugurated more movements in the direction of interdenominational coöperation and unity than any other Christian leader of the last half-century. He possessed that rare kind of insight which sees not only need, but the right thing to meet it. It is not often that the Lord makes a poet, an orator and a practical leader in one man."

Working Suggestions.

Art of Addressing Children (The), by H. Jeffs. George H. Doran Co., New York. 176 pages. \$1.50 net.

This well known speaker to boys and girls retains his grip, even though he admits in the preface that he is a grandfather!

Some 40 pages give a level-headed analysis of the child's mentality, psychology, religion, love of play, and other qualities: the understanding of which makes the teacher and preacher wise in his approach to children.

Follow 120 pages of typical original addresses to children classified under these captions: "Fairy and Folk Tales," "The Bible of Nature," "Through Many Windows," "Children and the League of Nations" (Mr. Jeffs is an Englishman), and "Heroes and the Hero of Heroes."

At School with the Great Teacher: A Sunday and Weekday Course, Part I, by Jeannette E. Perkins and Frances W. Danielson. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 78 pages, size $7\frac{3}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{2}$ inches. \$1.

This course is advertised as "an unprecedented forward step in modern religious education. It comprises a unified Sunday and weekday course, a thorough-going embodiment of the principle of project education, and an actual outgrowth of religious experience on the part of groups of children, seeking to learn from the Great Teacher how to live at home, at school and at play."

The course is intended for eight-year-old children. It constitutes Grade III in a new series called "Everyday Christian Living."

Frankly, we can't quite make out what it is all about. There is no list or development of lessons: only trimmings in the form of music, stories, hikes, games, and what not. The authors may have had success with such a course, but can others follow in their steps?

Church Usher's Manual, by Willis O. Garrett. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 63 pages. 50 cents.

Wise suggestions to help make ushers understand the value of their job in securing order and fellowship in the church. The head usher is also given special pointers, and the formation of an Ushers' Association is urged. The pastor and other governing bodies back of the usher receive the final word.

A blank Head Usher's Report, to be filled out and filed, giving the name and location of each usher, the number of people present, weather conditions, etc., is something new and useful.

Competent Church (The): A Study of Christian Competency and Church Efficiency, by Frederick A. Agar. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 93 pages. \$1.

The title and subtitle tell the whole story. Various spiritual and administrative and material aspects of the subject are discussed in closely printed, well arranged pages. And as a local church is made up of individuals, more or less attention is paid to the consideration of individual Christian competency.

Cyclopedia of Pastoral Methods: A New and Comprehensive Ready Reference Manual for Ministers of all Denominations, by G. B. F. Hallock. George H. Doran Co., New York. 270 pages. \$2.50.

As Dr. Hallock says, one needs to go to the Table of Contents to find all that this book offers. The matter is presented in four Parts: Aids to the Worthy Conduct of Public Devotions, 100 pages; Intercessions for Special Persons and Objects, 10 pages; Dedictory Forms, Services and Prayers, over 80 pages; Ceremonies for Special Occasions, 56 pages.

It is a book for pastors. Hardly anything that a pastor could be called on to do is overlooked and unprovided for.

My Message to Sunday School Workers, by Marion Lawrance. George H. Doran Co., New York. 290 pages, with frontispiece. \$2.

We need only indicate the nature of the contents of this lamented leader's book. It is advertised as "his 25 greatest addresses," delivered at home or abroad during 30 years of S. S. activity, and selected by Mr. Lawrance before death overtook him.

All sorts of themes are treated: sometimes the romance of the S. S., or the fine art of teaching, or the essentials of the teacher and his equipment, the art of illustration and questioning, S. S. evangelism and other activities, relation to home and nation, and so on.

Primary Story Worship Programs, by Mary Kirkpatrick Berg. George H. Doran Co., New York. 195 pages, illustrated. \$1.75 net.

Primary grade programs for the Sundays from October to June, inclusive. One theme covers the program for each month: for example, January, "The Heavenly Father and His Children"; February, "Love for Country"; March, "Jesus the Children's Friend." The programs consist of songs, Scripture readings or recitations, prayers, the offering, talks or stories, and other occasional features.

The material has been used in actual experience, and so has passed the test.

Symphonic Sermons: A New Method in Homiletics, by William L. Stidger. George H. Doran Co., New York. 329 pages. \$2.50.

In Dr. Stidger's last book he gave a chapter to this new method in preaching, symphonic sermonizing. By this he means, taking two lines of poetry that sum up the thought of his text, and quoting these frequently until they fasten in the hearer's memory, just as a musical theme in a symphony haunts one's memory. This method proved such a hit that Dr. Stidger used it extensively, and in this book he prints 17 full sermons; 160 classified themes about God, Christ, conversion, sin, love, mother-

hood, home, prayer, power, nature and God, faith, hope and immortality; and eight sermon outlines.

That certainly is a helpful menu for any preacher!

Tested Methods for Teachers of Juniors, by Mabel Crews Ringland. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 155 pages. \$1.25.

The object of this book is to indicate and discuss with teachers the various aspects of their work among junior Sunday school scholars, and the problems arising therefrom. Although not a textbook in the conventional sense of that term, Mrs. Ringland's volume deals expertly with an unusually large number of matters which relate to this particular field of Sunday school activity. In all, some 37 subjects are touched upon, varying as widely as "The Boy Who Makes Trouble in the Class" to "The Use of Pictures," "Mid-Week Activities," and "Winning Them to Decision."

Young Convert's Problems (The), and Their Solution, by A. C. Dixon. George H. Doran Co., New York. 93 pages. \$1 net.

A useful book for the instruction of young converts. With fine simplicity and spiritual vision, and a thorough understanding of the needs of young men and women, Dr. Dixon discusses the Christian life and the essentials of spiritual development. He sympathetically considers questions which occur to young Christians as they face the insistent distractions of modern life. There are chapters on the Holy Spirit, the church, the Bible, prayer, temptation, money, amusements, and a most impressive and inspiring closing chapter on "The Ideal Christian."

Better Religious Education.

Character Building in a Democracy, by Walter S. Athearn. Macmillan Co., New York. 163 pages. \$1.75.

The author is dean of the School of Religious Education and Social Service in Boston University. He is one of the most advanced of the order of religious educationists. In this book his thesis is that unless democracies learn how to build those fine ethical qualities which undergird the virtues of their citizens, they cannot endure. To achieve this object we must have better religious schools.

Dean Athearn is long on statistics, graphs, researches. He tells a sorry story of existing religious education, but foresees the day soon when professional educators will control the situation and will bring in a system of religious schools as efficient as secular schools.

Creative Teaching, by John Wallace Suter, Jr. Macmillan Co., New York. 159 pages. \$1.

This book, which is happy in its title, is

not a technical pedagogic treatise, but a simple yet helpful discussion of certain principles of teaching in the moral and religious sphere. Its subtitle reads, "Letters to a Church School Teacher," but it contains suggestions useful to any teachers of religion to young people.

A pronounced feature is its use of pronouns in the chapter headings,—Your Job, Your Preparation, Your Lesson, Your Pupils, Your Class, Your School, Your Church, Your Reading and Yourself,—the last not least important. Teaching, according to the author, is an art that uses science. Some references, which might be fuller, are added by way of a bibliography. The concluding word is a verse quoted from Leslie Pickney Hill:

Lord, if 'their guide I still must be,
Oh let the little children see
The teacher leaning hard on thee!

—C. A. S. D.

Project Principle in Religious Education (The): A Manual of Theory and Practice for Church-School Leaders, by Erwin L. Shaver. University of Chicago Press, Chicago. 375 pages. \$2.75.

An excellent discussion, by the secretary for New England of the Congregational Education Society, of the theory of the "project," the new educational device now so popular, with illustrations of its applications in various fields.

Mr. Shaver here gives the results, in part, of his survey in 1921-1922 of week-day schools of religion. His aim is to keep to scientific methods while preserving the vital values of religion. The treatment is divided into three parts, dealing with Theory and Technique, Descriptions of Church-School Projects, and Source List of Public-School Projects: to which are added some observations on the cooperation of parents, and a report of the Forest Hills Conference on correlation of programs in religious education.

The problem-project type of teaching, it is premised, is not so much a method (much less an entirely new method,) as it is a point of view and a principle to be applied. Even primitive educational methods were based upon the idea that education is life, and that one learns by doing. If it be nothing else, the "project" has an AIM varying according to the circumstances of the pupil, for as Kilpatrick says, "Projects may present every variety that purposes present in life." He tells us that the steps in a project are purposing, planning, executing, and judging. The church must find its opportunity along these lines, for the material with which it deals is at least as interesting as secular stuff.

Mr. Shaver has done a good piece of work in making this book, which contains many hints useful to a religious teacher, and

incidentally supplies some helpful bibliographical references and suggestions to further study.—C. A. S. D.

The Ministry.

Minister and His Ministry (The), by John Mahan English. Judson Press, Philadelphia. \$1.25.

First in a series to be known as the John Mahan English Lectureship, established by the alumni of Newton Theological Seminary to be delivered annually to the students by experienced pastors and other specialists in Christian work. Dr. English himself, in whose honor the lectureship was founded, was asked to deliver the first lecture.

The theme can be gathered from the title. A book of this sort written by an expert always has a fascination for a minister.

Dr. English knows thoroughly the problem of the modern church. His lecture on "The Minister as a Leader" takes us into the heart of the minister's job, and is especially fine. He is treating under this caption the definite objectives that give unity and purpose to the various activities of the church.

Like other books of its class, it needs to be upon the bookshelf to be read and re-read from time to time to give fresh courage and direction to the minister's life.—S. C. H.

Work of the Pastor (The), by Charles R. Erdman. Westminster Press, Philadelphia. 257 pages. \$1.50 net.

To an alumnus of the Institution (and this one is wholly respectful and deeply grateful,) this book is instantly recognized as a fruit of Princeton Theological Seminary. Its author has preserved the tradition of the long and distinguished line of his predecessors, and worthily does he carry it on.

There are the thoroughgoing treatment, scholarly basis, unvarying adherence to principles, meticulous care in detailed statement, and the inevitably consequent arid quality, which are so characteristic of publications from this institution.

In its pages are the soundest of advice, the most accurate of information, and the latest ideas concerning that branch of theological training known as Practical Theology, the chair of which the author occupies.

The change that has come in the last two or three decades in the work of the ministry is fully recognized and clearly stated. There is a fine chapter on church organization, and another on church administration, but it is insisted that "Preaching and teaching and the care of souls are never to be neglected on the excuse that the pastor is occupied in perfecting an efficient organization of his people."

Another change is indicated, though not noted as having occurred, by the presence

in the book of minute instructions as to notes of "acceptance" and "regrets," and other matters which in former days the student in a Presbyterian Theological seminary, almost without exception, had somehow learned before he arrived there.—W. O. S.

Worthwhile Stories.

Forty-Eight Bernard Street, by Mrs. S. R. Graham Clark. Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago. 127 pages. 30 and 75 cents.

A well written story of an invalid girl of lovely Christian character, whose bright influence upon all she met appears throughout the plot. There are several other fine characters. The scene is laid in everyday life in a small town. The tone is positive throughout, with definite Christian experiences of various kinds.

Man from Smiling Pass (The): or, The Hon. Abe Blount, by Eliot Harlow Robinson. L. C. Page and Co., Boston. 359 pages, with colored frontispiece. \$2.

A stirring story of the Southern Highlands, with a political flavor, in which Abe, born in the hardest conditions there possible,—his father shot in a feud before he was born, his mother dying early and leaving him to the tender mercies of the world,—is helped by a mountain preacher to an education, when his native ability and ambition and honesty carry him on and up. As the story opens he is sheriff of the county, the terror of moonshiners. Then he is appointed state's attorney, and in time becomes senator. A pleasing love story ends happily, and there are other strains such as appear in tales of that region.

Marigold Horse (The), and Other Stories, by Margaret R. Seebach. Women's Missionary Society of the United Lutheran Church in America, Philadelphia. 271 pages. \$1.25.

Fifty-two delightful short stories of missionary adventure in several lands. Many of them have appeared in "Everyland" and other magazines, where they were well received. There is variety enough to select from for readings for special occasions. One's interest is maintained throughout at high water mark.

Matilda, Governess of the English, by Sophia Cleugh. Macmillan Co., New York. 469 pages. \$2.50.

A rattling good story, set in the early Victorian era in the high life of London and Paris. The heroine is a demure little nursery governess who gets a job in the family of the Duchess of Westmainham. There is evidently a mystery attached to her, and it is solved before the romance ends by her

identification as of noble descent. All the characters are well drawn, and the episodes are plausible, though sudden and startling enough.

You seldom find a new book of this type today: it therefore affords an agreeable change.

Path Wharton Found (The), by Robert Quillen. Macmillan Co., New York. 257 pages. \$2.

Robert Wharton was a wealthy youth of ambition and parts, who became an Episcopal minister to occupy himself. The death of his father, the loss of wealth, and other personal troubles exposed the vacuity of his religion, so he pulled out and dropped off the train in a small Southern village. Here is where the new "path" begins, which leads him through a row with two village ruffians, a case of typhoid, a love affair, and conversion at a revival meeting, to find God and himself.

A fine well-woven story: the characters well drawn and the Southern village types well depicted.

Thirtieth Piece of Silver (The), by Lilian Hayes. Macmillan Co., New York. 326 pages. \$2.

Tradition has it that when Judas went back to the Sanhedrin and flung down the 30 pieces of silver, one coin rolled away and was not recovered immediately. It passed into circulation, and infected every one who possessed it with treason, and lust of money or power, and led to his undoing unless he got rid of it.

Six episodes in its later history are related in this book: I, in Rome during Domitian's emperorship; II, in Saxon England; III, in Venice in the time of the doges; IV, in Peru with the coming of the Spaniards; V, in the Netherlands under the oppression of Philip of Spain; and VI, in Russia and England in 1940.

The change of scene and era provides room for variety and thrills, making the book a succession of fast-moving short stories.

Sermonic.

Radio Preaching: Far-Flung Sermons by Pioneers in Broadcasting, edited by Philip I. Roberts. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 217 pages. \$1.50.

A clever idea, this, to compile a volume of radioed sermons, so that the reader can have visible evidence of the marvelous extension of the preacher's reach to listening thousands on all sides.

The preachers whose sermons are included are: Clausen of Syracuse, N. Y.; Forsyth of St. Louis; Gilkey of Springfield, Mass.; Gordon of San Francisco; Hough of Detroit; Jenkins of Kansas City; Kerr of Pittsburgh; Keigwin of New York;

Macartney of Philadelphia; McMillin of Cincinnati; Shannon of Chicago; Smith of Los Angeles; and Swearingen of St. Paul. Each address is accompanied by a note by the speaker, telling the value of the radio and some results he has secured by its use.

Sermons on Great Tragedies of the Bible, by Ashley Chappell. George H. Doran Co., New York. 136 pages. \$1.60 net.

Fourteen striking sermons, textual, topical, and otherwise. Thus, titles include "The Tragedy of Sin," "of the Almost," "of the Ashen Face," "of the Blighted Memory," "of Spiritual Sleep," and so on.

Way to the Best (The), and Other Sermons, by Rev. Miles H. Krumbine. George H. Doran Co., New York. 174 pages. \$1.50 net.

The author is pastor of the First Lutheran Church of Dayton, O., where, we are told, he has had marked success. Here he gives us 12 sermons and magazine articles, which show wide reading and constructive thinking and fearless spirit. Several of the sermons have titles suggestive of the times, and all start with texts, though there is little if any expository use of the texts.

Missionary "Lives" for Children.

Livingstone of Africa: Heroic Missionary, Intrepid Explorer, and the Black Man's Friend, by C. T. Bedford. 59 pages, with illustrations and a map.

John Williams of the South Sea Islands: A Fearless Pioneer, and a Missionary Martyr, by Norman J. Davidson. 59 pages, illustrated.

Bishop Bompas of the Frozen North: The Adventurous Life Story of a Brave and Self-denying Missionary amongst the Red Indians and Eskimos of the Great North-West, by Nigel B. M. Grahame. 60 pages, illustrated.

These books have attractive pictures and decorations in colors on the front covers. They are published by the George H. Doran Co., New York, at 65 cents each.

Of Historical Interest.

History of Religion in the United States (The), by Henry Kalloch Rowe. Macmillan Co., New York. 207 pages. \$1.75.

The author of this book, the professor of Social Science and History in the Newton Theological Institution, Newton Center, Massachusetts, has performed a literary feat of no ordinary sort. He has produced a book which, in the midst of the flood from the presses of today, actually fills a place otherwise vacant; and within a very moderate space he has covered a long period and a wide field with an ease and force

of style that carries the reader on with the interest of a romance.

It is an attempt—and a first attempt,—to write a history of religion in America strictly from its own standpoint. That is, it is treated neither from the ecclesiastical nor secular standpoints.

The enthusiasm of the writer for his theme is evident in every sentence, and, one would think, is likely to be infectious, even though a reader might not be predisposed to the subject.

The influence of religion in molding the actual life of our own people, the romance of home missions, the present power of religious opinion and sentiment among us, are splendidly presented.

Very interesting also is the author's opinion as to the present situation. He says, "Both conservatives and progressives have yet to learn that a religion of high value must be enlightening to the individual mind, must be constructive of personal character, must knit man to God in a conscious personal relationship, and must promote a purposeful and efficient social will: and that it must do this for every last man."—W. O. S.

International Christian Movements, by Charles S. Macfarland. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 222 pages. \$1.75.

Dr. Macfarland's occupation in life for some years has been to promote national and international Christian unity and co-operation. The Foreword of this book is dated March 1924, so it represents about the latest word on its subject.

Christian movements are classified, I, as of interdenominational character, for co-operation and unity, for foreign service, for fellowship and mutual service; II, as denominational bodies and movements, like the Baptist World Alliance; III, as national organizations developing international friendship and service, like the Federal Council and the Christian Associations; IV, as Christian bodies for international peace, service and relief; as well as other unclassified organizations and movements.

A Directory at the end gives the addresses and names of officials of all these organizations.

Recent Labor Progress, with Special Reference to the Work of the Federal Government under James J. Davis, Secretary of Labor, as Outlined in the Annual Reports of the Department of Labor, by Roger W. Babson. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 336 pages. \$2.

The title tells the story. After a sketch of Secretary Davis' life, the book unfolds labor progress in chapters on conciliation, immigration, standards of living, workmen's and old age insurance compensation, chil-

dren and women in industry, profit-sharing plans, and other aspects: 15 chapters in all, of which the last is "True Religion," an assertion of the value and necessity of true religion in the world of capital and labor.

Year Book of the Churches, 1924-25, edited by E. O. Watson. J. E. Stohlmann, Baltimore, Md. 490 pages. \$1.50, plus 12 cents postage.

A short course in church history. We will not attempt to go into details about the book. It is compiled by the Federal Council of Churches, aims for fulness and accuracy in the information given, and presents this Table of Contents:

Section I. Directory of Religious Bodies, with Synopsis of History, Doctrine, and Polity;

Section II. Directory of Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America with Affiliated, Coöperative and Consultative Bodies;

Section III. Directory of Interchurch, National and International Service Organizations;

Section IV. Directory of Chaplains in the Army and Navy of the United States, with Summary of Religious Work in Both Branches of the Service;

Section V. Religious Statistics and General Information;

Section VI. Bibliography of the Federal Council.

Various Themes.

Absurdities of Evolution (The), by Guy Fitch Phelps. Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago. 142 pages. \$1.25 net.

The title sounds harsh, but the author means just that. He deliberately avoids ponderous language and style, believing that he can expose his subject better by talking in everyday language. He literally shows how incredible many things are that evolutionists assert, how contradictory, how little they would be listened to in any other field of study or experience.

But he does more than that. He indicates numerous difficulties that evolution has to face, numberless gaps that have to be filled by something more than hypothesis. He shows how leading scientists disbelieve evolution, how evolutionists differ radically among themselves, and generally how cautious one ought to be before swallowing all that is claimed for the theory.

Evolutionists never mention such things in their one-sided writings.

Authority in Religion, by Edward Grubb. Macmillan Co., New York. 116 pages. \$1.25.

This small book is based on a larger book by the same author, entitled "Authority and the Light Within," published in 1908. It

is not intended for theological experts, but its professed aim is frankly to help young people who "are in perplexity because of the breakdown of the infallible outward authorities that have been supposed to control men's beliefs," and to encourage them to trust more fully to an inward authority, which is furnished by the appeal of truth itself to a normally constituted mind. It is plainly stated, however, that a full-rounded Christian faith cannot dispense with the legitimate authority of either church or Bible, still less with that of Jesus Christ. The choice, then, comes not between outwardness or inwardness, but as to the stress to be put upon either.

The principle of authority is considered with relation to reason, conscience, faith, the church, the Bible, and Jesus Christ himself. A chapter on the authority of the Spirit discusses the Inner Light doctrine of the Quakers, to whose standpoint the author seems to incline. His conclusion is that each of the outward authorities that "men have set up to control their beliefs and conduct has a fitting place, but that not one of them is final or absolute." It is contended that the real unity of Christians is in their common experience of the one Lord and the one Spirit, whose life, like the sap in the living vine, flows through them all. This is no doubt true, but the need (or mode) of connecting one man's mystic experience with that of another, that is, of organizing Christian experience into institutional or other forms which will give it special meaning and point and punch, is a question which does not come on his horizon. Nevertheless, whatever authority ultimately may be, it must certainly be phrased to some extent in the forms and symbols and literatures of the successive generations.—C. A. S. D.

Cause and Cure of Infidelity (The), including A Notice of the Author's Unbelief and the Means of His Rescue, by David Nelson. George H. Doran Co., New York. 309 pages. \$1.75 net.

This looks like an old-fashioned book: which it is. Dr. Nelson was born in 1793. He lived a useful and full life, first as a medical man, then as a preacher and college president in the Middle West.

If any one today will have the patience to wade through this closely argued and voluminous treatise he will know more about the type of infidelity Dr. Nelson was obsessed with than he did before.

Evolution, Knowledge and Revelation, by Stewart A. McDowall. Macmillan Co., New York. 99 pages. \$1.

This meaty little book contains the Hulsean Lectures before the University of Cambridge, England, for 1923-24. Its author is chaplain and senior science master in Win-

chester College. His style is simple, but in spots his thought goes deep. Here and there, as in the paragraph on Intrinsic and Extrinsic Limitation, or whether an "Is" can "is not" itself, so to speak, the discussion becomes rather aridly abstract. But the aim of the book, to formulate a theory of knowledge which shall be consonant with the facts of biological science, while not neglecting the spiritual interpretation of nature, is commendable. Logic (or deliberation) is given its true place, but it is argued that that is only a surface knowledge compared with "the knowledge of reality which grows out of the interpenetration that takes place between two personalities who become great friends." "Evolution in its upward progress amounts to a course of preparation to qualify us for the intimacy with Jesus by which we acquire this superior species of knowledge of God."

A helpful treatment of a subject which exercises from time to time all thoughtful minds.—C. A. S. D.

Fundamental Ends of Life: What Men Want, by Rufus M. Jones. Macmillan Co., New York. 144 pages. \$1.75.

A serious attempt to answer the central human questions, What do men live for? What do we want most? What is the real dynamic of life? The author presents Plato's answer, Christ's answer, and Kant's answer. He then proceeds to study some of the deepest and richest experiences of life,—the mystic's experience of God, and the experiences which we all have of happiness, beauty, love, truth. Here he finds some of the pursuits of life which are satisfying in themselves and which at the same time furnish the supreme evidence of a deeper spiritual universe underlying the world of fact and sense. It is a book which deals constructively with the most important issues of our time.

The substance of this volume was given as lectures at Oberlin and Yale.

Imitation of Christ (The), by Thomas à Kempis: edited with Introduction and Notes by Brother Leo. Macmillan Co., New York. 353 pages, with frontispiece. \$1.

An educational pocket-size edition of this devotional classic, adapted for use by high school and academic classes. Introductory essays discuss the "Imitation" as literature, the life of Thomas (1379-1471), sources of the book, theories of authorship, etc.

Liberalizing Liberal Judaism, by James Waterman Wise. Macmillan Co., New York. 150 pages. \$1.50.

These are days when Judaism, to itself as to the world, seems to be on trial. A part of Israel is reactionary, harking back to the covenants, which is in a way good, and a

portion is "liberal." Liberal Judaism, as defined by Rabbi Wise, emphasizes the moral law as of more importance than the ceremonial, to every iota of which Rabbinic Judaism attaches importance. This moral law it finds in the Bible, and also in post-Biblical literature. According to it Judaism is a religion unchanging in basic moral principles, but varying from age to age in the practices to which it adheres. Liberal Judaism denies the ideal of Messianic Nationalism, but offers instead a Messianic hope for the final establishment of truth, justice and peace among men,—the combination of all "in the confession of the unity of God."

Rabbi Wise writes this book, however, not on but *at* liberal Jews, who do not, as much as they might, gain the young people. He stresses the importance of moral training for the young, and would include in it acquaintance with the history and ethics of Hebraism. It is declared that intermarriage with Gentiles is a personal problem, not a church affair, and that Judaism must neither frown upon, nor advise to, it. A tribute is paid to Jesus, but the eyes of the author do not appear to be open enough to perceive the real ability of the divine Galilean to deal effectively with all modern problems. Yet still the challenge goes out to Liberal Judaism to advance with open mind and courage to deal with the question of Jesus, which by Rabbinic Judaism, sad to say, is regarded as closed.

There is much in this volume which will prove interesting to Gentile readers, giving an insight into the unresting speculations of the modernized Hebrews, and the concluding proposition which sums up all the discussion, namely, that the Jewish religion must be prepared to lose itself that it may find itself more completely, strangely and significantly recalls a similar remark by Jesus.—C. A. S. D.

Living Issues in Religious Thought from George Fox to Bertrand Russell, by H. G. Wood. George H. Doran Co., New York. 187 pages. \$2.

These brilliant and varied essays maintain the high quality of the Selly Oak Colleges (England) publications, and their reputation for independent thinking and scholarship, as well as their emphasis on aspects of Christian truth which are vital for today. The author's expressed purpose in writing the book is "that it may contribute to a revival of Christianity in the true sense of those much-abused words."

Some of the chapter headings, such as "The Moral Scepticism of Today," "Liberal Protestantism and Modernist Criticism," "The Attitude of Mr. H. G. Wells towards Jesus Christ," "The Next Revival of Religion," "Personal Religion and Social Progress," indicate the contemporary character of the ten essays.

Mastery of Manhood (The), by C. F. Wimberly. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 144 pages. \$1.25.

The author's idea is that nowadays the individual is being lost in the mass: hence five chapters on man as God's masterpiece, six on man's enemies, four on his redemption, six on his body and soul destroyers, three on his home, etc.

Sufficiency of Christianity (The): An Inquiry concerning the Nature and the Modern Possibilities of the Christian Religion, with special reference to the Religious Philosophy of Dr. Ernst Troeltsch, by R. S. Sleight. George H. Doran Co., New York. 255 pages. \$3.

A masterly presentation of the religious philosophy of Dr. Ernst Troeltsch, who has been a dominating figure in European thought since the beginning of the present century. The book is difficult reading in parts for those unacquainted with philosophical terms, for Dr. Sleight is often extremely technical in his language: yet the reader is repaid if he desires a thoroughgoing discussion of certain phases of modern theological and philosophical thought.

Dr. Troeltsch claimed most emphatically to be a Christian, and in his thinking made an earnest attempt to reach religious certitude. He believed in the reality of a divine revelation, "spontaneously generated from the presence of the divine within the human spirit." Historically Jesus was the subject of such a revelation, the truest revelation of God known to man, so that Jesus truly reveals God to men. "God is an absolute personal Spirit," capable of love. Redemption is a "process" by which "a man is lifted out of his self-sufficiency into the very life of God." "Religious certitude has its validity within the subject, its ground in a spiritual experience." It is a restatement of Christianity, avoiding pantheism on the one side and modern materialism on the other. Much is of course lacking for the evangelical Christian. Conversion, miracle, the deity of Christ in the New Testament sense are gone. Christ's own claims of deity "cannot be taken at his own estimate." Dr. Troeltsch's "fundamental assumption of the unity and homogeneity of human history excludes at once" all that we usually mean by miracle. In plain terms, we have a restatement of Christianity by one of the great minds of the century, but we have a right in appraising its value to raise the question whether it is adequate to meet the world's needs as Calvinism or Wesleyanism has done and is doing, especially as the author at least suggests this question. "The fall is a myth." "An ex abrupto supernatural incarnation which was to effect an objective redemptive act is unnecessary and untrue." "Representative penal sufferings are impossible from any scientific point of view." Certainly anyone holding such views as a preliminary assumption in approaching

Christianity will preach a different gospel from that proclaimed with such power by D. L. Moody.

Dr. Troeltsch's claim for the reality of a divine revelation in the spirit of man may prove his most abiding contribution to religious thought.—S. C. H.

Supremacy of the Spiritual (The), by Herbert Alden Youtz. Macmillan Co., New York. 183 pages. \$1.75.

An unfortunate antithesis has arisen, at least in popular parlance, between the conception of the spiritual and "social service," or between the "practical" and the mystical. This able book by Dr. Youtz is an energetic and well-argued protest against the de-spiritualizing, or non-spiritual, tendency to regard religion simply subjectively, as an excursus in psychology, or as merely an overt morality which is indistinguishable from its own alms-deeds. He does not deny that faith must fruit in conduct, and that too of the socially serviceable kind, but tries to show that the gospel consists "of a school of methods by which any man who so wills can repeat and verify in his own person the great affirmation that the inner experience of actual sonship establishes, contact for us with the hidden springs of life."

After an Introduction on the Insolvency of the Self, the discussion concerns itself with such themes as Understanding Spiritual Reality, The Missing World, The Dimensions of Personality, The Winning of an Autonomous Soul, The Conquest of Spirit over Nature, Christian Ethics as Living Guidance, The Moral Discovery of God, and the Permanence of the Spiritual. Emphasis is rightly placed on the service of Jesus as the prophet of personality.

The whole book is an insightful and inspiring inquiry into the fundamental ends of human experience, and a satisfying answer to the question, What does life mean? —C. A. S. D.

What is Worth While, by Anna R. Brown Lindsay. Thomas Y. Crowell Co., New York. 48 pages. 50 cents net.

An address to college classmates first printed in 1893, now reaching a total of 357,000 copies. This edition also contains another address, "Working with Giant Power." For "giant power," says Dr. Lindsay, we must find God, unbury the spiritual nature of man, know the Bible and Christ, the influence of the wonder-working Holy Spirit, the power of prayer, and the hope of immortality.

What Shall I Do with My Life? A Study Course for Pupils of Junior and Senior High School Age, by Harold I. Donnelly. Westminster Press, Philadelphia. 248 pages. \$1.25 net.

Part I is concerned with "My Life Pur-

pose," which is discussed in relation to Jesus Christ; Part II with "My Life Work," which entails consideration of principles underlying the right choice of occupation in any of the trades or professions; Part III with "My Life Program," in its physical, mental, social, educational, and spiritual sides, as to time, possessions, relation to Christ, etc.

The matter is well chosen and arranged, and should make a helpful, interesting course.

What Shall We Play? by Edna Geister. George H. Doran Co., New York. 173 pages, illustrated.

Apparently this volume on Miss Geister's stock-in-trade is intended for the kids themselves to learn from: it is written in children's style. It contains directions for some 50 games, half for indoors and half for outdoors. They are further arranged in groups, "Not Noisy," "Very Noisy," "Moving Around," "Sick-a-bed," "Table," "Races," etc. Miss Geister can write so that children will read.

Numerous decorations and heavy ink drawings add to the juvenile appearance of the book.

AMONG THE LATEST BOOKS.

Abolition of War (The), by Sherwood Eddy and Kirby Page. George H. Doran Co., New York. 224 pages. \$1.50 net.

Art of Preaching (The), by David Smith. Doran. 221 pages. \$2 net.

Authority in Religion, by Edward Grubb. Macmillan Co., New York. 116 pages. \$1.25.

Bible for Youth (The), with Introduction and Notes, by R. C. Gillie and James Reid. Thomas Nelson & Sons, London. 1003 pages, with maps. 4/-.

Codes of Ethics, by Edgar L. Heermance. Free Press Printing Co., Burlington, Vt. 520 pages, illustrated. \$4.

Dictionary of the Bible (A), by John D. Davis. Westminster Press, Philadelphia. 856 pages, with maps. \$4 to \$8.

Hardest Part (The), by G. A. Studdert Kennedy. Doran. 195 pages. \$1.50 net.

History of the Christian Church, by F. J. Foakes-Jackson. Doran. 648 pages. \$3 net.

Inner Circle (The), by Trevor H. Davies. Doran. 315 pages. \$2.50 net.

Lord We Love (The), by Charles R. Erdman. Doran. 136 pages. \$1.50 net.

Old Testament (The): A New Translation, by James Moffatt. Doran. 560 pages. \$2.50 net.

Six Nights in the Garden of Gethsemane, by Russell H. Conwell. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 76 pages. \$1.75.

There They Crucified Him, by John A. Hutton. Doran. 268 pages. \$1.75 net.

Way to the Best (The), by Miles H. Krumbine. Doran. 174 pages. \$1.50 net.

Any book acknowledged, reviewed, or advertised in this magazine will be forwarded postpaid by the publishers of the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK upon receipt of the advertised price. Remit by check, postal or express order.

THE LIFE OF JESUS.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS.

February 1. The Vine and the Branches.

John 15. 1-11.

The figure used by our Lord was a familiar Oriental one. To what extent can it be pressed in an attempt to explain the mystical union of Christ and the believer? There is danger of our overdoing it by multiplying analogies in a methodical way: something Orientals do not do. For one will soon find himself involved in doctrinal difficulties, if he is asked, for instance, how a branch can be taken away and burned if it is a part of Christ (2, 3), or how one could be a branch if he did not abide in Christ (4, 6). Some say the passage refers to service, not salvation: but "abiding" is not service.

Better go easy on analogies, and select teaching points that are supported by direct Scripture!

Abiding in Christ.

"Abiding" in Christ is just continuing in Christ. The branch is "in" the vine before it can "abide in" the vine. The abiding Christian life is the continuous life, continued living union with Christ, receiving unbroken spiritual sustenance from him. And life means growth. God give us grace to live such a life!

Degrees in fruit-bearing; how attained.

No fruit, fruit, more fruit, much fruit (1-8).

The first condition of fruit-bearing is being and abiding in the vine (in Christ).

The better yield is the result of cultivation. The wild grape is not under consideration here. The vine-dresser trains and prunes the vine, cutting away the dead wood and rank growth so that the sap shall flow in certain channels.

The pruning hook is Christ's word or teaching (3), for instruction and discipline. As you read his words, they rebuke some habit or purpose or attitude of yours, and you put it away.

Fruit is character, not active service. It is the result of sunshine and shower as well as pruning. Fruit-bearing is the goal of the Christian life.

Clusters of grapes.

Answered prayer (7). Bible teaching about prayer is abused by taking isolated statements without regard to other teaching on prayer. But the twofold condition laid down here,—abiding in Christ and his word abiding in the believer,—is so all-inclusive as to Christian life and character that such a one will ask nothing contrary to Christ's mind and will.

The Father's glory (8). The glory, the pride of a vine-cultivator is in the results

he gets in the way of grapes. The better the yield, the larger his reputation.

Christ's love (9).

Obedience (10), which is always a condition of union and communion with Christ.

Joy (11).

All this fruit our Lord bore himself, and now he would exhibit the same in his disciples. Notice how personal he is in this passage: "I," "my" Father, "my" words, "my" disciples, "my" love, "my" commandments, "my" joy.

February 8. Christ's Intercessory Prayer.

John 17. 1-13.

The 17th of John has been called the Holy of Holies of the New Testament. We are admitted to one of the most solemn scenes in all Scripture, moments of intimacy between the Son and the Father ere our Lord went forward to his death the next day.

Recall the whole occasion! In chapter 13 Lord Jesus and his disciples gathered for the Passover supper. He first taught them by an object lesson: bathing their feet. Then followed conversation, questions and answers, teaching. Now our Lord rises higher,—into communion with the Father, in their hearing, before the supper party breaks up.

Familiarize yourself and your scholars with the words of Scripture, our Lord's words! When we overhear a person praying, we do not criticize, we listen reverently. Let us do that here! If ever a lesson should be taught in an atmosphere of prayer, this is it.

A person's prayers give us an insight into his heart.

In talking with the disciples earlier the keynote had been "I go." Now, talking with God, the keynote is "I come to thee" (11, 13). Note all the statements that indicate that our Lord considered his work was done, his career nearly ended, he was returning home.

In his self-revelation observe his assumption of deity, his relation or subordination to the Father, his mission and faithfulness and achievement.

For what and for whom does our Lord pray? and in what spirit? It is conversation with his Father concerning (1) himself, his past, present, future, (2) his immediate disciples, and (3) beyond them the worldwide circle of future believers.

The upward look, 1-5. Our Lord prays for himself.

"Glorify thy Son!" Not for selfish reasons, but that he might glorify the Father. It meant revelation of his spiritual glory as preëxistent Son of God and Saviour of the

world. Notice how often "glorify" occurs in the lesson passage.

Notice also the frequent use of "I have" Our Lord renders an account of his work to God, so to speak: a finished work, with nothing to regret, nothing to do over again. So his career was not a failure.

The outward look, 6-13. Our Lord prays for his disciples.

He was solicitous for them after he was gone: not that they should be taken out of their everyday life, but for their safe keeping, their unity, their joy.

He is still interceding for believers (Hebrews 7.24, 25).

"Have you ever observed," wrote Dr. Scofield, "that the nearer Jesus came to the cross the more he spoke of his joy? You do not find that he testified much of his joyfulness in the earlier part of his ministry, but as he went on, drawing ever nearer to Calvary, there is a constant reference to the deep joy which filled his being. Just when the tide of sorrow is rising highest, the joyfulness seems to rise above it and triumph over it. Jesus found his supreme joy in bearing the sorrows of others."

He who prayed such a prayer must be more than man: he must be God!

February 15. Jesus in Gethsemane.

Mark 14. 32-42.

The scene before us is one for quiet contemplation rather than for critical analysis. Excepting only his death scene, there is no recorded incident in our Lord's earthly life so full of mystery, so heart-breaking. We see him in his humanity in the deepest personal terror and distress (Weymouth). Before the final stages begin, he evidently seeks the quiet and solitude of this well-known spot in order to brace himself by prayer and communion with God.

The passage can be best studied on one's knees.

Verses 36 is the kernel of the whole incident. His petitions were answered—not by removal of the cup, perhaps, but by strength from heaven and by God's will being done. Self-surrender, submission to God's will is the heart of the matter.

What was that "cup"? Not the impending physical agonies, not death: for we cannot believe that Lord Jesus weakened so much in his physical or moral courage as to get into this physical condition in the intensity of his desire to sidestep these things at the last moment. Some think that he shrank from the kind of death he was about to die,—burdened by the sin of the world, suffering the vengeance of the Law, separated from God. Some, that the "cup" was nothing less than a supreme effort of Satan to kill him there, before he could reach the cross and accomplish man's redemption in the way set forth in type and

prophecy: for Satan has the "power of death" (Hebrews 2.14). Still another view is that he feared lest he would collapse and die under the physical strain before he reached the cross. Lord Jesus said his soul was "exceeding sorrowful, EVEN UNTO DEATH,"—read the parallel accounts in Matthew 26.36-46 and Luke 22.39-46 to see his extreme agitation in body, soul and spirit. And in Hebrews 5.7 it is recorded, "Who in the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him FROM DEATH," etc. Is there any other event of which this could be written but Gethsemane?

Our Lord rose from prayer in victorious obedience. Gethsemane prepared him for all that came after, even for Calvary. Prayer is the highest preparation for every crisis and duty.

It is the privilege of every believer to spread out his desires before God, with submissive will. And "Father" must ever be the first word in our prayer.

"Blessed is he, who, following Christ into Gethsemane, follows him out by the same door,—the door of a supreme consecration to his Father's will, the door of a prayer which seeks not to change the divine will to the human, but the human will to the divine" (Lyman Abbott).

February 22. Good Citizenship.

Romans 13.

In this section of Romans Paul is applying the gospel to everyday life. Chapter 13 has to do with the civil and social relations of the Christian believer. Paul was writing to persons who lived under the Emperor Nero, but the principles he lays down ought to underlie all human government.

Today, the birthday anniversary of the Father of this nation, it is appropriate that we should study this lofty conception of government. Multiplication of laws goes hand in hand with laxity of observance and disrespect for officials in this nation. Why?

Study the passage in Weymouth and Moffatt. They are much more intelligible than the Authorized Version.

Duties in relation to the ruling authorities, 1-5.

There are three factors in the case: God, the ruler, the individual citizen.

Notice the fivefold reference to God: three times designating civil authority as ordained of God, twice calling the ruler the minister (servant) of God. That is Paul's starting point. God is the absolute ruler. Civil government is a divine plan. It is not of the devil, as some have said, though some office-holders might lead one to think so.

The authority thus constituted is for so-

cial, not for personal good; for righteousness, not for wrong-doing. Hence the ruler should remember his obligation before God, and rule accordingly. He should be for the honest citizens's benefit and commendation, and for the punishment of the wrong-doer.

Another consequence is that every individual is in contact with God in civil rule. His response to the demands of government has a semi-religious aspect. Hence it is a matter of conscience (5), not of fear of punishment. Subjection to civil authority is a Christian duty. No exception is mentioned, not even the apostles,—or the pope!

Paul is not writing a treatise on government, and only touches upon its positive aspect in regard to the conditions his readers were living under. He says nothing here about tyrannical rule, unjust laws, or other abuses. Presumably when the ruler or the law falls short of God's plan, the individual is not obligated to obey, but should remain loyal to God. That is where the "conscientious objector" comes in. Abuses in government do not do away with the underlying principles any more than abuses in marriage rob it of its sacredness. Paul is talking of the settled order, not of the temporary office-holder. In a democracy it is for voters to put the right kind of men and women in office and to advocate right principles of law.

What would be our standard of law and

law observance if we as a nation recognized Paul's sense of God?

Payment of obligations, 6-10.

The same principle that underlies the establishment of civil government holds good in regard to its maintenance. Even tax-collectors are ministers of God!

There is one standing debt that can never be liquidated: love of fellow man, "the other" fellow, friend or foe, without distinction of race or rank. Such love is fulfilment of the law: for love would do no wrong, while violation of righteous law is wrong-doing, and somebody suffers.

Dr. Parker said that the program of verse 7 could have been written by a pagan, but it required a Christian to write 8-10.

How far would love of this sort on the part of Christians go toward making the nation Christian?

Relation to the Lord Jesus Christ, 11-14.

"Live thus," translates Weymouth, "realizing the situation." "You know what this Crisis means," Moffatt.

The near approach of dawn—beautiful figure!—is the reason and incentive Paul adduces for what he has been saying. Whoever puts on the Lord Jesus Christ and lives in the hope of his coming is the ideal citizen, in inward character and in outward conduct. He will walk as in daylight, even though the night of sin is still around him.

SELECTED THOUGHTS FOR THE QUIET HOUR.

(Learn a Text a Day.)

FEBRUARY, 1925.

SUNDAY, 1st. *Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled, and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Acts 4. 13.*

"He is a good man, but he does not remind me of Jesus Christ." When you have said that about a Christian you have pronounced a fatal verdict. What else are we in the world for but to remind men of Jesus Christ?

MONDAY, 2nd. *Keep yourself in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life! Jude 21.*

The attitude of others to us is not the important matter, but our attitude to them.—John Timothy Stone.

TUESDAY, 3rd. *Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, . . . and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth. Matthew 25. 24, 25.*

If the rash man has his perils, there are

also perils for the over-prudent. Do you remember why the man with the one talent failed? "I was afraid," he said, "for I knew thou wert an hard man, and so I buried my talent in the earth." The other servants took the common risks in giving out their money to the changer, but this man would risk absolutely nothing, and, willing to risk nothing, he lost all.—G. H. Morrison.

WEDNESDAY, 4th. *Men ought always to pray. Luke 18. 1.*

If I feel myself disinclined to pray, then is the time when I need to pray more than ever. Possibly when the soul leaps and exults in communion with God it might more safely refrain from prayer than at those seasons when it drags heavily in devotion.—Charles H. Spurgeon.

THURSDAY, 5th. *And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow. Joshua 5. 11.*

Daily need and daily strength
All the way supplying?

Yes indeed, though clouds be dense,
 And the conflict trying!
 Never, never doubt his love
 Through the days of sorrow:
 Ever, ever look above,
 Think of God's Tomorrow!

FRIDAY, 6th. *Who is my neighbor?*
Luke 10. 29.

Why do I ask this question? Is it to evade my duty, or to justify my neglect of it? Or do I ask it that I may be helped to the discharge of my duty?

SATURDAY, 7th. *Thy gentleness hath made me great! Psalm 18. 35.*

Thus is it that God still makes his heroes, by gentleness. That which wrought such grace for David will do like wonders for us, and more, for to us the word has a wealth of meaning far beyond all that David ever knew.—Mark Guy Pearse.

SUNDAY, 8th. *I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry! But God said unto him, Thou fool! . . . So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God. Luke 12. 19-21.*

The really good things, the big things, are inside and not outside the man. The big thing is not luxury, but contentment; not a big house, but a big satisfaction; not accumulated art treasures, but a fine artistic appreciation; not a big library, but a serene studiousness; not a big estate, but a large vision. The big things are not "the things that are seen, but the things that are not seen." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." Such are the goodly pearls!—J. H. Jowett.

MONDAY, 9th. *No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Matthew 6. 24.*

This is quite true, but men want wages from one master while they serve the other. For we find people everywhere who want to serve the Evil One,—or serve themselves, which is the same thing,—but who do not want the wages of sin.

TUESDAY, 10th. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1. 9.*

O Christian, if you are seeking to have fellowship with Jesus, do not fear to confess each sin in the confident assurance that there is deliverance! Let there be a mutual understanding between the Lord Jesus and yourself that you will confess each sin, and obtain forgiveness! Then you will know your Lord as Jesus who saves his people from their sin.

WEDNESDAY, 11th. *And Jacob was left alone: and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. Genesis 32. 24.*

Jacob could not sleep. He could not even lie down. And when he had taken the decisive step of crossing the Jabbok, and when his household had all laid them down to sleep, Jacob was left alone, and Jacob set himself for a whole night of prayer. I suspect that he had not done so much as that for the past twenty years.—Alexander Whyte.

THURSDAY, 12th. *Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? John 21. 20.*

Pray do not abuse Iscariot! Do you remember the time when two courses were set before you, the one dishonorable but leading to immediate wealth, the other honorable but meaning strenuous endeavor and doubtful success in a worldly sense, and you paused, and then took the course that led to pelf and pleasure, to gluttony and suicide? It was then, though you did not speak one word, that you betrayed the Lord!—Joseph Parker.

FRIDAY, 13th. *I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments. Exodus 20. 5, 6.*

We scatter seeds with careless hand,
 And dream we ne'er shall see them more;
 But for a thousand years
 Their fruit appears
 In weeds that mar the land,
 Or healthful store.

SATURDAY, 14th. *Exercise thyself unto godliness: for bodily exercise is profitable for a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come. 1 Timothy 4. 8.*

Holiness is spiritual wholeness or health. It is the elimination of all sin and the restoration of the soul to the divine image. Godliness means Godlikeness. God is holy: hence the godly man is brought into the divine likeness and favor.—L. L. Pickett.

SUNDAY, 15th. *All things are yours. 1 Corinthians 3. 21.*

We might have more joys if we understood that all things are ours. All time belongs to the children of light. We are not bounded by the little gray dewy morning of the present: we have all the mornings that ever grew in the garden of the horizon. We are only poor because we are faithless. If we had faith we should have all time, all strength, all confidence, and all peace!—Joseph Parker.

MONDAY, 16th. *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. John 11. 11.*

Jesus called Lazarus his friend,—blessed title, glorious privilege, friend of Jesus! Am I his friend? He gives us the test, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."—E. H. Harding.

TUESDAY, 17th. *Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. 1 Peter 2. 12.*

There is nothing in human experience that glorifies God more than a consistent life.—John Timothy Stone.

WEDNESDAY, 18th. *When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was. John 11. 6.*

My soul, be not afraid of God's silence! It is another form of his voice. God's silence is more than man's speech. God's negative is better than the world's affirmation. Have thy prayers been followed only by a calm stillness? Well, and is not that God's voice, a voice that will suffice thee in the meantime till the full disclosure come? Wait for him in the silence, and ere long it shall become vocal!—George Matheson.

THURSDAY, 19th. *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 1 Corinthians 2. 9.*

This hour a grander work awaits your hand

Than any written in the treasured past: Lay to the oar! The tide runs fast, runs fast,—

Life's possibilities are yet unspanned!

—Annie L. Muzzey.

FRIDAY, 20th. *Show me wherefore thou contendest with me! Job 10. 2.*

Depend upon it, God often sends us trials that our graces may be discovered, and that we may be certified of their existence! He takes away our comforts and privileges in order to make us better Christians. Well, Christian, may not this account for the troubles through which you are passing?—Charles H. Spurgeon.

SATURDAY, 21st. *For in him we live, and move, and have our being. Acts 17. 28.*

All men, whether they know it or not, are unconsciously dependent upon God, else no man could live out a day. The religious man is one who is aware of that truth, and who seeks by active choice and will to know and do the will of him in whose great hand he stands.—Joseph Fort Newton.

SUNDAY, 22nd. *Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven! Matthew 18. 3.*

Oh, when shall we learn the sweet trust in God that our little children teach us every day by their confiding faith in us? We who are so mutable, so faulty, so irritable, so unjust, and he who is so watchful, so pitiful, so loving, so forgiving! Why cannot we, slipping our hand in his each day, walk trustingly over that day's appointed path, thorny or flowery, crooked or straight, knowing that evening will bring us sleep, peace and home?—Phillips Brooks.

MONDAY, 23rd. *Judge not, that ye be not judged! Matthew 7. 1.*

Others will judge you, not by what you can be, but by what you are; but you must judge yourself, not by what you are, but by what you can be.—Ivan Panin.

TUESDAY, 24th. *A fool uttereth all his mind, but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards. Proverbs 29. 11.*

Some think that freely speaking all that is in their minds is a mark of good judgment: yet that is the very thing that the Word of God condemns when it says, "A fool uttereth all his mind, but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards."—James Ostema.

WEDNESDAY, 25th. *Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee today! 1 Kings 8. 28.*

The great prayers of the Bible are not men's prayers. Solomon never prayed that great dedication prayer out of his own head, until he had taken that head to have it sanctified, refined, ennobled, and enriched by special communion with the Father of all true sanctuaries. Do not take credit for your own religion! You will spoil it by claiming it. Say rather, when the soul takes wing and seeks the gate of the morning, This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, wonderful in counsel and excellent in working!—Joseph Parker.

THURSDAY, 26th. *God, who is rich in mercy, . . . hath quickened us together with Christ, . . . and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2. 4-7.*

All mature piety extols the grace of God, that unmerited love which each man thinks was magnified most abundantly in his own case, "By the grace of God I am what I am" is a confession which is elicited from every man as he reaches the crest of the

hill, and looks back on the cities of the plain from which he has escaped.—F. B. Meyer.

FRIDAY, 27th. *Heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. Romans 8. 17.*

If I am a fellow-heir, let me begin to enjoy a portion of my inheritance by loving and being loved of those who are joint-heirs with me and Christ!

SATURDAY, 28th. *Seeing we are compassed about by so great a cloud of wit-*

nesses, . . . let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith! Hebrews 12. 1, 2.

My friend, let us often turn in and walk through this gallery of faith! It is good to see what it did for them of old time: how it uplifted and ennobled them, how it gave them invincible might, steadfast courage, brave endurance. This was the power that faith had formerly: and thank God, it has the same power still!—Mark Guy Pearse.

ILLUSTRATIVE HINTS AND HELPS

ON THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPICS.

Mrs. Ida Q. Moulton.

Christian Endeavor as an Expression of Friendliness.

Philippians 2.1-11. February 1.

"Rose," said a Virginia housewife to her old colored cook, "I want you to have an unusually nice dinner tomorrow, for it is my husband's birthday."

"Pears to me," replied the cook, in a tone that suggested a protest against the too frequent occurrence of such festal events, "'pears to me dat husband of yours had a burfday 'bout dis time last year, didn't he?"

Let us make this anniversary an unusual day of thanksgiving for the millions of young people who have been drawn into the current of Christian service through the expression of friendliness found among Christian Endeavorers!

* * * * *

One Endeavor society, in a college town that was poorly supplied with means of transportation for luggage, secured a wagon and offered to deliver free the baggage of new students, also placing at their disposal a list of boarding-houses.

There is nothing among young people quite equal in creating new friendships, and fostering old, as a whole-hearted devotion to a common cause.

* * * * *

In Wales and Ireland there are a great many bee-keepers. Every third year, it is said, each owner of bees is required to distribute some of his honey among his neighbors because his bees have gathered honey from the flowers in the neighboring fields.

We need friends, not so much that they may help us in our need, as that we may help them in theirs. The one-word motto, "others," expresses the essence of the friendliness of Endeavorers.

* * * * *

Less than a decade ago a certain church

after much discussion voted to make the pews free in the evening. Strange as it may seem, many of the regular pew-holders told the ushers not under any account to put any of the "riff-raff" into their pews.

How contrary this is to one principle of Christian Endeavor, "All ye are brethren"! This organization is not like stratified rock formation, where one layer forever holds the other down. It is more like the ocean, where every drop is able to move freely, and where the lowest drop may rise to glitter on the highest wave. "For one is our Master, even Christ." There is no respect of persons with him.

The Conquest of Selfishness.

Romans 15. 1-7; Matthew 16. 22-27. February 8.

It is related that years ago when Sir Edwin Arnold visited America he spoke to the students of our oldest university. He gave an earnest, forceful description of the wars of the past, then spoke of greater contests in the future. The following sentences gripped his hearers:

"Gentlemen of Harvard, in 1776 and 1812 you conquered your fathers. In the years from 1861 to 1865 you conquered your brothers. Will you permit an Englishman to say that your next victory must be over yourselves?"

These words also apply to the conquest of selfishness in the heart, with this change, "Your FIRST victory must be over yourselves."

* * * * *

When in 1865 the cholera broke out in Paris, among those who offered their services was the noted scientist Louis Pasteur. With two assistants he established himself in the attic of one of the hospitals above the cholera ward, and carried on his investigations of this dread disease.

A friend met him one day, and said: "Experiments of that sort must require much courage."

To which Pasteur replied: "What about duty?"

"We then that are strong ought not to please ourselves." Then unselfishness is a duty!

* * * * *

Elizabeth Fry has left on record these words:

"Since, at the age of seventeen, my heart was touched, I believe I have never awaked from sleep, in sickness or in health, by day or night, without my first waking thought being how best I might serve my Lord."

There is no better way to expel selfishness than that practised by Elizabeth Fry, the prisoner's friend.

* * * * *

There is no selfish act by one committed
But will recoil:
Its sure return, with double ill repeated,
No skill can foil.

As on the earth the mists it yields to heaven
Descend in rain,
So on his head, whoe'er has such acts given,
They fall again!

Striking Instances of the Friendliness of Jesus.

John 11. 1-11; Luke 19. 1-10. February 15.

Some rude children in Madagascar were calling out, "A leper! A leper!" at a woman passing who was stricken by that terrible disease. A missionary lady who was passing touched the poor woman on the shoulder, and said:

"Come and sit on the grass beside me!"

The woman burst into sobs, crying: "A human hand has touched me! For seven years no one has touched me."

"And Jesus put forth his hand and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean!" Touching the untouchable! What more striking illustration of the friendliness of Christ and of this missionary lady could be given?

* * * * *

One cannot look into a great boiler to see how much water it contains, but running up beside the boiler is a tiny glass tube that serves as a gauge. As the water stands in this tube, so it stands inside the boiler.

And so our friendliness toward mankind is the gauge of our friendship with the unseen Christ. By precept and example, through commands, miracles and parables, Christ has taught us how to express our friendliness to others.

* * * * *

A group of Japanese men had been working in menial positions on American war vessels, when it was discovered that they were graduates of Japanese naval schools. They had been willing to serve their emperor in humble capacities in order to learn how Americans built their warships.

When Jesus washed his disciples' feet, he

said by that act, "Be ready to do menial tasks for your king!" Must we go to the Orient for examples of obedience to this command?

* * * * *

"Papa!" called a little girl from the foot of a parsonage stairway. "Somebody wants you!"

As this was the 6th time he had heard that call that morning, he said within himself:

"Oh, these petty annoyances of the parsonage, how I dislike them!"

As he unwillingly descended the stairway these queries came to his mind:

"Well, ought you not to be pleased, not annoyed, because somebody does want you? Are you not in the ministry because you thought somebody would want you? Would you care to stay in this work if nobody did want you?"

Every instance of Christ's friendliness to men arose from the fact that somebody needed him. We should make more friends for him if the same motive animated us.

Friendliness as Expressed through Industrial Missions.

Isaiah 61. 1-4. February 22.

I—in Meno, Africa, the natives built a cathedral out of bricks of their own manufacture.

N—one is so capable to build and repair "waste places" as the missionary.

D—not stop praying for industrial missionaries!

U—ness men go for Christ where men go for gain, what avail is commerce in heathen lands?

S—cience is putting new and dangerous power into heathen lands.

T—errible is this power to contemplate unless it is Christianized.

R—eformations can be best brought about by example.

Y—ou cannot "eat your morsel alone," for we are all brethren.

IN

M—issionary friendliness speaks emphatically through industrial missions.

I—gnorance and backward customs keep millions in subjection.

S—hall we send into heathen lands machinery that creates industrial problems and not send also the solution?

S—ince we are our brother's keeper, it is our duty to teach our brother the power of self-support.

I—ndustry in some lands seems like the work of a magician.

O—pening prison doors to them that are bound: what a glorious privilege!

N—ominal Christians fall short in not being interested in all kinds of missions.

S—tewardship of our mental and physical powers is something for which we must give account.

A Japanese went to work in a factory in Manchuria where most of the employees were Chinese, and lived together under a Christian Chinese overseer in a dormitory. At the end of a month the Japanese wrote home:

"This Chinese overseer washes his face every morning, and also goes to the bath, but the other 60 do not even wash their faces, and spend rest days in bed and gambling. I think I will be a clean Christian like my overseer."

Such is the subtle influence of industrial missions!

* * * * *

When Cyrus Hamlin faced the problem of providing work for starving Armenians, he discovered a trade that was open, and with the help of Ure's "Dictionary of the Arts" built a mill and a bakery, made and repaired tools, learned to make better bread than the native bakers, brought a Commissary General to terms, and won his respect.

BIBLE NOTES FOR DAILY DEVOTIONS. LEAVES FROM AN INTERPRETER'S NOTEBOOK.

Rev. John Gardner, D. D., Riverside, Cal.

FEBRUARY, 1925.

Sunday, 1st. Luke 22. 24-38.

It is a little startling to find such a discussion as this following on so holy an incident as the Last Supper. We should prefer to think that it happened earlier and following upon the request of the sons of Zebedee. We could understand such an incident before they had taken their places at the table, and indeed, it would then make natural the action of Jesus in washing the feet of the disciples as recorded by John.

It is a contention as to place and power. Who is to rank greatest in the estimation of men when the kingdom is established? Jesus says that titles are won and honors awarded on the basis of service. There will be degrees of greatness, but they will be rewards for unostentatious service. What is demanded if men will have recognition is unswerving loyalty in the midst of trials and temptations. The Master loves his disciples: he will not fail to give them recognition, but they must trust him and be faithful to him.

To show his solicitude he speaks to Simon Peter. He warns him of temptation. There is one who has sought permission to sift him as with a winnowing fan, and his request has been granted. But Jesus is a paraclete, a helper, and has prayed for him that he may not utterly fail. Peter will find the storm too much for his frail strength. He will stumble, but he will rise. And as Jesus has stood by to help and strengthen him, he must stand by and help others.

Verses 35-38 show a change of method in missionary work. At first the disciples were to make no provision, but now they must make provision. Grieve says we have here "not a council to resist the coming arrest of Jesus, but to prepare for the new

missionary experiences awaiting them after his death, when, instead of the welcome accorded them on their first tour, they will have to make their way in the face of opposition and hostility. The sword is thus probably metaphorical."

Our Father, grant that men may learn to hate sin and love mercy! Make us worthy of the sufferings of Christ! Teach us to do that which will bring honor to our Lord! In his name. Amen.

Monday, 2nd. Luke 22. 39-67.

"According to his custom" is a pregnant phrase. It showed that Jesus had spent much time in Jerusalem, and that he instinctively sought retirement from the bustle and confusion of the multitudes. He prayed in solitude. In verse 41 we are not to imagine that he simply offered a prayer, but that he prayed repeatedly.

It is interesting to note that while Matthew and Mark say that Judas actually kissed Jesus, and that according to an arrangement which he had with those who were to arrest him, Luke says he approached with the intention of kissing him. We can imagine that Jesus drew back in indignation at the base foulness of the act.

My readers may be interested in an attempt to harmonize the details of our Lord's trials as given in the four gospels. I am indebted for it to the Rev. John Bond. "(1) Christ is taken to Hannas, father-in-law to Caiaphas, and de jure high priest. See John 18. Hannas asked him about his teaching, hoping to get some word from him of which he could take hold. Christ is struck by a servant, and remonstrates. Here, too, occurred the denial of Peter, at the porch, and then by the fireside. Christ was being examined in a side room, or more probably in the

gallery above, and this is confirmed by Mark 14. 66, from which by a side glance he could catch Peter's eye. Hannas sends him back to Caiaphas, who possibly occupied the same house as his father-in-law.

(2) We now come to a difficulty. Were there two meetings in the house of Caiaphas, one at night (illegal), the other after daybreak? Verse 66 makes Christ acknowledge himself to be the son of God at daybreak, Mark begins chapter 15 by making it occur at night. The condemnation is at night, the ways and means of best bringing him before Pilate the work of the early morning. With this Matthew agrees. That there were certainly two meetings is shown by comparing Mark 14. 64 with Luke 23. 51, where Joseph of Arimathea is in a minority."

O Lord, we marvel at the love that led thee to Calvary! We were unworthy of such regard. We rejoice that thou didst endure the cross, because by it we have learned the joy of forgiveness and the power to live in a Christlike spirit. Help us to gain in grace! Amen.

Tuesday, 3rd. Luke 23. 1-25.

We are indebted to Luke for knowledge of the political crime with which Jesus was charged when he was brought before Pilate. No matter that they tried to support it by falsehood, the Sanhedrin laid a serious accusation against him when they asserted that he was trying to undermine Roman authority. Evidently Pilate looked into the matter, for he gave his verdict, I find no crime in him.

A difficulty has been found in the statement that Pilate sent Jesus to Herod because of the hour. If Jesus was confined at 9 a.m. it seems to some critics impossible for Pilate to have tried him, sent him to Herod, retried him, and sent him to Calvary. Grieve says that Luke may have used the story as emphasizing the innocence of Jesus, the good will of Pilate, and the insults of the Jewish (rather than the Roman) ruler and his guard. "The Herod is Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, and therefore Jesus' sovereign; he may have been in Jerusalem for the Passover. Jesus is silent when questioned, as Mark says he was before Pilate. When he is brought back to the procurator the latter repeats his conviction of Jesus' innocence, and says that Herod is of the same opinion. Scourging should meet the case; it would at least teach the accused to be more discreet."

Pilate's question as to Barabbas or Jesus was really clever, and had he been possessed of moral courage would have exposed to him the whole plot and made the release of Jesus inevitable. For Barabbas had been tried and found guilty of the very crime concerning which Pilate and Herod

agreed that Jesus was innocent. Why did not Pilate realize the drift of his question and the answer returned? A strange blindness swept over his mind and conscience, and made him the instrument of condemnation of the Lord of men.

Almighty God, may we not fear men or fear to lose their favor! Teach us to reverence truth, to know the divine requirement of doing justly, loving mercy and walking kindly before thee! In Christ's name. Amen.

Wednesday, 4th. Luke 23: 26-56.

On verse 26 Adeney says, "Cyrene was the principal town of a district in North Africa corresponding to the modern Tripoli, where a colony of Jews resided. They had a synagogue at Jerusalem, to which possibly Simon belonged. As Simon was a very common name we cannot certainly infer that he was a Negro. His name is Jewish. The fact that it is mentioned, when so few names are given in the Gospels, suggests that he was well known to the early church. In Mark 15. 21 he is described as the 'father of Alexander and Rufus,' evidently two well known Christians. In Romans 16. 13 we meet with a Christian named Rufus, to whose mother Paul refers with grateful affectionateness. If he were the same Rufus mentioned in Mark, we should have the wife and the two sons of the cross-bearer as Christians in the later period."

How are we to account for the fact contained in the words, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"? They undoubtedly express the spirit of Jesus. We all know how irksome is the teaching to love our enemies. But Jesus did that thing, and so did Stephen, and so must we. A passage like this could not have been invented.

The words of Jesus to the penitent thief seem to imply that after death the soul does not fall into unconscious sleep, but into new associations with our Lord. The passage also seems to exclude the idea of an intermediate state, called by some purgatory. Paradise is really a Persian name for a garden, but the Jews used it to describe the state of the blessed dead. In it they waited for the resurrection. "The suppliant receives more than he asks. This very day he shall have the society of Jesus in a realm of joy and peace."

Stock says: "The question of questions is, Why did Jesus Christ die? St. Luke does not interrupt his historical narrative to tell us, and his account of the crucifixion does not of itself suggest, as those of Matthew and Mark do, by recording his cry of desolation, that the Lord had laid on him the iniquity of us all. But Luke does mention the rending of the veil in the Temple. That was a significant event. It symbolized

the breaking down of a barrier between man and God. And so we see the profound meaning of St. Peter's words, 'Christ hath once suffered for sins the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God,' and of the Epistle to the Hebrews, 'Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Christ.'"

Merciful God, we know the reality of the gospel and we bless thee that whereas once we were blind, now we see; once we knew our guilt, now we know thy forgiveness! Make us grateful, reverent, obedient! In Christ's name. Amen.

Thursday, 5th. Luke 24.

Bond says the probable order of events was this: "Mary Magdalene gets first to the sepulcher, and runs back for Peter and John: meantime, the other women have a vision of angels, and leave. Mary arrives with Peter and John, and remains behind after they have examined the tomb and in their turn have left. Here she sees the angels, and next the risen Lord himself, who shortly afterwards reveals himself to the other women also."

We are indebted to Luke for the story of the appearance of Jesus to the two men who journeyed to Emmaus, a place about five miles E. S. E. of Jerusalem. One of the men is named Cleopas, the other is unnamed. They were deep in conversation when Jesus drew near. What was the manner of his appearance we are not told. In reply to his question Cleopas says with astonishment, Art thou a solitary stranger, a man living apart and aloof from man? The Master then draws him forth, and finding the nature of his difficulty tells him that he ought to have remembered the Scriptures and not to have been so slow of thought and perception. Then Jesus analyzed the first five books of the Old Testament and the prophetic writings, showing them the inevitableness of such an ending to the Messianic mission. Invited to become a guest, Jesus became host, saying grace at the meal and then becoming invisible.

On verse 43 Adeney says; "It must be admitted that this is a difficult passage, for it is not to be supposed that the resurrection body needs our material body's food. Yet the reference to flesh and bones in verse 39, just as this eating in verse 43, suggests the original physical body unchanged in its materials and functions. It is interesting to observe that this is only found in the third Gospel, that written by the companion of Paul, who in writing to the Corinthians denied that the resurrection body was the same as our present body of flesh and blood. But the sudden vanishing and the sudden appearance in Luke also indicate a great difference. The mystery is wholly beyond our comprehension, because it is wholly beyond our experience. The fact that Jesus

did really come back from the dead is the only fact of importance, and in this all accounts agree."

The story of the ascension must be read in the light of the other Gospels and of the Acts of the Apostles. Otherwise Luke would give the impression that all the events recorded by him in his Gospel happened on the same day. Erdman says we have a number of important truths, and mentions three: "(1) Jesus then withdrew from the sphere of the seen and physical to the sphere of the unseen and the spiritual; (2) Jesus then assumes universal power: not at the time of his resurrection, but at the time of his ascension, was he seated on the right hand of the majesty on high; (3) It was therefore at the time of his ascension that Jesus entered into his glory."

O Lord, we rejoice in the power that was mightier than the grave: that we think of thee not as one held of death, but as having trodden death under thy feet! Give us confidence in our immortality! May we rejoice in the hope that is the anchor of the soul, fixed within the veil, sure and steadfast! Amen.

JOHN.

Friday, 6th. John 1. 1.

In interpreting the synoptic Gospels we have found much material common to all three of them, but now we enter on practically new ground. Some eight or nine passages deal with incidents or events common to all four Gospels, but the rest is peculiar to John.

The duration of our Lord's ministry seems to be longer. John shows the Master not as confined to one area with a single visit to Jerusalem, but as passing to and fro incessantly. We miss the parables, but find in their place long discourses on the most profound truths. From the outset Jesus is recognized as the Messiah. On the miracles recorded in this Gospel Grieve says, "Miracles are not simply actions dictated by mercy and lovingkindness towards a sorrow-stricken humanity, but are signs of overwhelming significance, designed to reveal the glory of God and the majesty of the divine Son."

There has been a great deal of discussion about the authorship of the Gospel, and the problem is far from being settled. It is unlikely that the Gospel was written later than 100 A. D., and very possible that it must be dated considerably earlier. There is no greater New Testament scholar than Bishop Headlam. He says, "We may, I think, be satisfied that so far as concerns everything except the language the book is not Greek. . . . The author of the Gospel was a Jew, whose thoughts and ideas were drawn almost exclusively from Jewish sources. Even the famous term the Logos

has antecedents not only in the Old Testament, but in rabbinical Judaism, and it is not probable that the author of the Gospel went further afield than the Jew Philo or some follower of his for the Hellenic coloring (if, indeed, there be such,) in the use of the word. The style is throughout Semitic: the author, an Aramaic-speaking Jew, thought in that language. Moreover, the tendency of all recent investigation has been to emphasize more decisively how much in the Gospel harmonizes with traditional Jewish thought. . . . If we turn to the contents there are, I think, quite clear signs that the author was acquainted with all the three synoptic Gospels. . . . As regards the teaching, there can, I think, be little doubt that, as we have it, it represents a development; that it has been translated into the language and thought of a later time; that it is influenced in a way that the teaching in the other Gospels is not by the theological ideas and expressions which grew up in the apostolic church. But having recognized so much, we may still hold that it represents a real tradition. The writer knew and understood our Lord's teaching, and interpreted it in a way which would harmonize with the thought of his own time. He wishes us to understand what seemed to him to have been our Lord's real meaning."

Merciful Lord, we beseech thee to cast thy bright beams of light upon thy church, that it, being instructed by the doctrine of thy blessed apostle and evangelical Saint, John, may so walk in the light of thy truth, that it may at length attain to everlasting life! Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Saturday, 7th. John 1.1-5.

What is the meaning of "Logos" or "The Word"? Its meaning was well known in the days when the Gospel was written. It was a term in frequent use among philosophers, both Jewish and Greek. The author was influenced by Philo of Alexandria, but more by the Old Testament. His object was to show the all-sufficiency of Christ.

Brooks says: "The word is the medium by which God becomes known to men, as a man's thought is made known and expressed by his speech. In Hebrew thought about God's relation to the world the word of active command, rather than the reason which plans and purposes, is prominent. In the beginning he spake, and it came to be. In poetry his word is personified. A similar process is seen in respect of the Spirit of God, and perhaps of his glory. The chief progress in this direction is the personification of Wisdom, largely under the influence of Greek thought. . . . It is in the writings of the Alexandrian Hellenist Philo whose bent is religious rather than philosophical, that the Greek doctrine of the

Logos . . . assumes a form closely related to that in which it appears in the Prologue. In Philo the Word is the sum of all the divine activities in the world. His function is to mediate the creative activity of God. Through the Logos God is revealed, and man can attain the higher life, so that the Logos is the agent not only in creation, but also in salvation."

It would be a mistake, however, to imagine that John is simply adapting Philo's ideas. His purpose is the exaltation of Jesus Christ our Lord.

These opening verses show the range of his thought. The Logos is in eternal relation to God and is the medium of creation. Life and reason which are expressed in the cosmos emanate from him. Reason did not come without a struggle. Darkness had to be overcome, and it was not completely dissipated until the Word was made flesh. Then the Light of the world shone forth in perfect luster, and man saw the fulfilment of the eternal purpose.

O Lord, we bless thee for thy presence in the world, for the light of reason and conscience through which we come to know thee, and for the fuller unveiling of thyself which we behold in the face of Jesus! Help us to know him and to walk in his ways! Amen.

Sunday, 8th. John 1.6-13.

McClymont says: "The writer now passes from the ideal to the real, from the general to the particular, and traces the reception which was given to the Word when he appeared in the world in personal form, heralded by John the Baptist. Notwithstanding their close historic relation to the Word, the Jewish people as a whole failed to recognize him, and rejected his claims. But a new family of God was called into being, not depending on ordinary generation, but resulting from the direct action of the divine will, creating in man a new spiritual life."

Great honor attached to John the Baptist. He was herald and forerunner of the Highest. He was friend of the Bridegroom. He was the first to greet the dawn. There never was a time when the Word was not luminous, or when he was not present in the world. Men failed to apprehend that which lay at the heart of things and was their explanation. He was always coming, but he was never received; always challenging, but never recognized. The failure was not peculiar to the Jews. Humanity failed to appreciate his presence. Yet there were individuals who perceived his presence, men like Abraham and Isaiah among the Jews, men like Plato among the Greeks, and as they did so realized a quickening of their souls by the power of God. Men failed to appreciate the secret of the Word

who imagine their glory to come through things physical. The higher life and the higher relationships are spiritual. Watkins says, "The condition is the submissive receptivity of the human spirit. The origin of life is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

Almighty God, by whose providence thy servant John Baptist was wonderfully born, and sent to prepare the way of thy Son our Saviour by preaching repentance, make us so to follow his doctrine and holy life that we may truly repent according to his preaching, and after his example constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the truth's sake! Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (Collect.)

Monday, 9th. John 1. 14-18.

Verse 14 deals with the incarnation, which has been called "the most profound mystery of the Christian faith." Why does John speak of "flesh," instead of "body"? Because body can be used of something not sensuous and earthy, as Paul shows in his letter to the Corinthians. What is meant by flesh? Watkins says, "The term 'flesh' expresses human nature as opposed to the divine, and material nature opposed to spiritual. It is not the approach of the divine and human nature in the region of the spiritual which is common to both that strikes the writer with wonder, but that men should have power to become sons of God, and that the Word of whose glory he has spoken in the earlier verses should become flesh."

The Word made flesh dwelt or tabernacled among men. The idea is of the flesh as a tent in which the Word dwelt for a period. Brooks says, "His disciples had seen how, when he dwelt in the tent of flesh, as the shekinah appeared in Israel in the Tent, his true character and being shone forth, the glory of an only-begotten Son, on whom the Father of all had bestowed all that he had to give, full of the attractiveness that God's favor gives, and of truth, so that he could make God known to men. The only natural explanation of 14 is that it refers to bodily and not to spiritual vision. It was rendered possible by the Word becoming flesh."

The witness of John the Baptist bore upon the surpassing greatness of Christ. That fulness which was revealed in him had a direct bearing on us. It was a fulness related to a need. There was and is no limit to the resources of Christ. Grace succeeds on grace endlessly. Two elements characterize Jesus Christ: the first is grace, the second truth or reality. Grace is related to love, it is love in expression.

Verse 18 is the climax to the prologue. The knowledge of God which is full and

perfect cannot be made known by a man. "The Word" alone is adequate to the declaration, and the Word declares that God is the Father. "Christ is the best and highest exponent of God. In his gospel we find the true exegesis (the very word used in the original,) or interpretation of God."

Our Father, we are glad to know that interpretation of thy nature which is enshrined in Jesus our Lord! We know thee: thy heart is infinitely tender. It is thy will that all should live. Help us to trust thy love! Amen.

Tuesday, 10th. John 1. 19-34.

John the Baptist came of a priestly line. His parents also were preëminent in piety. He was a man of remarkable power. By self-discipline and prayer, by separation from the world and brooding upon the prophets, he came to realize his calling as the forerunner of the Christ. All men counted him a prophet.

His challenge was ethical. He laid hold upon a ceremonial and made it an act charged with ethical significance. Baptism was a symbol of spiritual cleansing throughout the Greco-Roman world. In Judaism it began as a ritual. When foreigners wished to become Jews, if they were men they were required to be circumcized and baptized and to offer sacrifices; if women, to be baptized and to offer sacrifices. By baptism they embarked upon a new manner of life. In connection with it were repentance and confession of sins. In this way they could enter on the new life necessary for all who would prepare for the coming of the Messiah.

Headlam says: "John's baptism was essentially ethical. Repentance, confession, baptism, a new life were essential, the result would be remission of sins."

The Baptist disavows any Messianic claims. He is not a prophet like unto Elijah or Jeremiah, he is simply a herald. But if so, was it not a presumptuous act to innovate a system of baptism? John's answer is that there is One in their midst whom they fail to apprehend, and all that he is doing is simply to prepare the way for that One.

McClymont says on verse 29: "The Baptist was familiar with Isaiah's prophecies, and the redemptive aspect of Christ's work would naturally be impressed upon him by the confession of sin which he had been constantly hearing from those who came to him for baptism."

We must note the universal scope of the Baptist's words. Like others the Baptist had failed to recognize his Lord when first they met, but revelation came to him, and in its light he bore his witness.

O Lord, we thank thee for those whom thou didst quicken, and who bore testimony

to thy grace! We rejoice in the word which came from them: we pray for light upon its meaning, and for a fuller realization of its power. Amen.

Wednesday, 11th. John 1. 35-51.

This is a great day in the lives of these men, as in the history of the world. Jesus was going on his errands of mercy. John the Baptist fastened his eyes on him and directed the attention of these earnest truth-seekers to him. The fact that these four men had made the long journey from Galilee to be taught by John, that he was dealing with them at this fateful moment, indicates what manner of men they were. Some one has intimated that four o'clock on that eventful afternoon marked the beginning of a new era.

Jesus challenges these men to a new way of living and to a new enterprise. He penetrates to the secret place in Peter's soul. He sends him forth on a great quest. How long Jesus remained in the South we do not know, but Peter feels his discovery to be of such importance that he goes in quest of Philip, and Philip in turn goes out to win Nathanael, whose other name may be Bartholomew. Nathanael is of a type to appeal to Jesus, and the incident reveals a man who penetrates to the spiritual nature of the Messiah's kingdom.

Dods says: "The astonished satisfaction that they found in their first interview with Christ is shown in the bursting enthusiasm with which Andrew sought out his brother Simon, and summarily announced, 'We have found the Christ!' That is how the gospel is propagated. The closer the tie, the more emphatic the testimony. It is what brother says to brother, husband to wife, parent to child, friend to friend, far more than what preacher says to hearer, that carries in it irresistible persuasive power. When the truth of the utterance is vouched for by the obvious gladness and purity of the life, when the finding of the Christ is obviously as real as the finding of a better situation and as satisfying as promotion in life, then conviction will be carried with the announcement. And he who, like Andrew, can do little himself, may by his simple testimony and honest life bring to Christ a Simon who may become a conspicuous power for good. The mother whose influence is confined to the four walls of her own house may lodge Christian principles in the heart of a son who may give it currency in one form or another to the remotest corner of the earth."

Our God, we crave that power to witness for our Master which shall enable us to interest and win others! Make us eager in our testimony concerning him who is our peace! In his name. Amen.

Thursday, 12th. John 2.

We do not know the precise location of Cana, but it was near Nazareth and a little to the North. Curiosity makes us inquire whose marriage this might be. Had this family moved there? Was the bride one of the sisters of Jesus?

In the reply of Jesus to the remark of his mother we must not imagine any disrespect. He evidently did not act until he had a motion of the Spirit which showed him that it was the will of his Father that he should perform a sign. Mary's position in the house warrants her giving direction to the servant in anticipation of the work she was sure would be performed. The ruler of the feast was the head servant. The fact that the family as well as the disciples went with Jesus to Capernaum deepens the impression that there was a relationship which made Mary solicitous about the shortage of supplies and led her to report the matter to Jesus as the elder son. The whole story shows the humanness and the joyousness of Jesus and those associated with him.

Verses 13-22 tell of a journey to Jerusalem, showing that Jesus lived a pronouncedly religious life in his observation of the national festivals of the Jewish church. The sight of traders carrying on their business in a place consecrated to worship roused Jesus to indignation. The scene was a desecration, and as illegal as it was vulgar. McClymont says, "Taking the law into his own hands, he put a stop to the unholy traffic, overturning the money-tables, driving out before him both men and sheep and oxen, and commanding the pigeon-dealers to remove their birds, a difference of treatment which is unnoticed in other Gospels, and bespeaks an eyewitness. It was no mere symbolic whip that he held aloft, but an actual scourge made of thick cords. But no blow was struck, and the obedience rendered to him was due to the might of his indignation and the majesty of his bearing, supported by the consciousness of superhuman power, as well as to the evil conscience of those whom he rebuked."

The testimony of John, the character and the power of Jesus, led many to believe that he must be the Messiah. If so they would rally to his standard. But he saw that their approach to him was due to a false conception. Not until he had taught them the true nature of his kingdom could he allow himself to be known as the Messiah.

O Lord, give us a zeal for the house of God! May we cherish its sanctity and remove from it all that confuses the mind and secularizes the thought! Teach us also to live kindly, joyously among our friends! Amen.

Friday, 13th. John 3. 1-10.

Brooke says: "Nicodemus is an example of those to whom the Lord could not trust himself. The story shows how he tried to bring those whom his teaching had impressed to a true conception of the Messianic kingdom. . . . A leader of the Jewish party, favorably disposed by what he has seen and heard of Jesus' works in the capital, comes to make further inquiries. What has the new rabbi to teach about the kingdom? He is not encouraged. A complete change of view, comparable to nothing but being born over again, is needed before he and his friends can understand the true character of the kingdom. Nicodemus' answer is not the mere stupidity of misunderstanding. He refuses to admit that the religious leaders can need so complete a change. Jesus answers that John's baptism of purification and the Messianic baptism of the Spirit are the necessary preparation for admission to the kingdom. The capacity to enter into the things of the Spirit must be created in a man by the Spirit of God."

There is nothing more profound or important than this passage. The breathing Spirit of God is not less authoritative because invisible. We may not be able to define the powers that operate on the soul for its cleansing and quickening, but their reality is demonstrated in their effects. The transformation that Jesus speaks about is not the result of intellectual culture. There are two meanings in the phrase "born again" or "born from above." One meaning is born afresh, making a new beginning in experience. The other meaning is, quickened by the Spirit of God in the higher region of being or personality. We must have both ideas in our minds if we would understand Jesus.

Our Father, we pray for spiritual quickening! Grant that we may no longer be after the flesh but after the Spirit! Quicken our love, our loyalty, our reverence! Save us, for Christ's sake! Amen.

Saturday, 14th. John 3. 11-21.

The conversation between Nicodemus and Jesus never ends. John is so moved by the truth that he forgets all about Nicodemus and proceeds to address the people of his own day and of all days upon the wonder of the power in God that saves, and the responsibility that rests upon those who are made acquainted with the fact. Nicodemus is not the only man who receives not the witness. The sin of the closed mind is in some respects the greatest of all sins. The man who will not recognize the spiritual side of life is incapable of appreciating the reality of the spiritual world.

On verse 14 Watkins says: "Jesus has taught that in himself heaven and earth

meet, so that while subject to the conditions of human life, he, the Son of Man, the representative of humanity, is in heaven. He goes on to show that what is true of the representative is through him true of the whole race. . . . In the divine counsels it was willed, and must be, that the Son of Man should be the witness to the world of the eternal power and love which save every man who grasps them."

The object of God is that every one who believeth may have in him eternal life. This is the primary work of Christ,—not judgment, but salvation. "For those who accept him, the need of judgment is over! For those who reject, their refusal is their sentence. But how can Messiah judge and yet not come to judge? Judgment, i.e., separation, is the necessary result of the coming of light which evil shuns but good men welcome. Judgment is a revelation of character, inevitable and self-working when once the Son has set the true standard."

Maurice says: "He who is bitten with serpents may turn to the brazen serpent: he who has been alienated from God may become at peace with him. But our Lord's words also discover to us another truth, different from this, nowise inconsistent with it. They show us that our consciousness is not in any sense the foundation of God's kingdom, that his love is the foundation of it. They make us understand that the revelation of that love is in very deed the reconciliation and regeneration of the world; that we may claim all as included in that reconciliation and regeneration; that our baptism of water and the Spirit, while it gives all warrant for conscious repentance and faith, must comprehend the unconscious, must declare upon what their consciousness is to stand. They ARE sons of God. God's Spirit is given them that they may grow into the knowledge of their sonship, that they may be able to live in conformity with it."

Very wonderful is the gospel, O God! We know not how thou canst love the unholy, but thy word declares that the world is taken into thy embrace, and we believe it. Grant us the consciousness of thy love as our soul's portion! In Christ's name. Amen.

Sunday, 15th. John 3. 22-36.

Jesus does not find the people of Judea ready for his Messianic work, and therefore he develops a program of preaching and evangelism in the region where John the Baptist is carrying on his great work. Jesus himself does not baptize with water, But his disciples do; hence there is controversy. But John the Baptist rises to a great height of self-forgetfulness and bears eloquent testimony to the Master and his work. Brooke says, "The splendid answer of self-

denial will always appeal to men. The success of Jesus comes from above. John reminds his followers that he himself has borne witness to his greater follower. His own duty is that of the Bridegroom's friend, to bring the bride Israel to the bridegroom. His joy will be when that is done."

What are we to say about verses 31-36? Are they a reflection by the evangelist on the testimony of John Baptist, or have they been misplaced, and ought they to have followed verse 21? Such a thing might easily happen if the author wrote on leaves of papyrus. At any rate the verses emphasize the solitary supremacy of Christ. He is not only chief among the great, he is unique. No other person has the authority to speak of heavenly things as an eyewitness. He has spoken, and responsibility rests upon those who reject his testimony. In him reside the powers of eternal life, repudiation of him brings the wrath of God. Watkins says, "This wrath is not the fierceness of passion, nor is it the expression of fixed hatred. It is the necessary aspect of love and holiness towards those who reject love and wilfully sin. It is not here spoken of as coming upon them, or as of passing from them. It abideth, ever has and ever must, for the wrath of love must abide on hatred, the wrath of holiness must abide on sin. But none need hate, nor none need live in wilful sin. He that believeth,—how vast the love and bright the hope of the all-including words!—hath eternal life."

Teach us, O Lord, the secret of faith! May we find not hate but love, not perishing but eternal life! Our souls cry out for thee. May we find thee in thy Son! Amen.

Monday, 16th. John 4. 1-26.

We have here not only a record of fact but a "masterpiece of literary realism." From what source did the writer gain his information about the conversation between Jesus and the woman? Did she tell the story in the exuberancy of the emotion which she evinced in her testimony to the men of Samaria? Or did Jesus tell the story when showing his disciples the ripeness of the people for the gospel? I fancy it was the woman.

Notice the symbol of water. Hitherto it had been used as a symbol of repentance and remission of sin. Now it is used as a symbol of spiritual satisfaction and of newly discovered resources within the soul that is enlightened by Christ. How can such a discovery be made? Only by working through an awakened conscience.

Grieve says with great acuteness: "That the need may be felt, and the desire awakened, conscience must be aroused. The attempt to escape this appeal by an inquiry on ritual questions was at once met by a demand for sincerity and inwardness of worship, and an assurance that the local-

ized worship of Samaritan and Jew alike would be superseded by such worship. The great truth about the spiritual worship of God arises in the mind and falls from the lips of Jesus almost inevitably in the reaction of his spirit against the religious exclusiveness of the woman. The declaration in verse 22 is not an instance of Jewish exclusiveness, but an appeal to the woman to recognize the inferiority of her own religious standpoint, of which she was too confident, so that she might be prepared to receive the instruction which Jesus, whom she had repelled as a Jew, desired to impart to her. Since the woman, with her countrymen, thought of the Messiah as the 'Converter' or the 'Guide,' and did not, at that time at least, seem to cherish the political expectations of the Jews, Jesus could reveal himself to her as the Messiah without fear of the political complications that such an avowal would have involved in Judea or Galilee."

Our Father, give us the gift divine! Break through every obstacle until thou reachest that with which thou hast endowed us! Let us discover the fountain of life! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Tuesday, 17th. John 4. 27-54.

The conversation with the woman of Samaria so challenged Jesus that he forgot his weariness and his hunger. He saw a great harvest waiting for the garnering. With extraordinary generosity he saw what other teachers and prophets had done in preparation for this day. He is meeting with a success such as had not come to him either in Judea or in Galilee.

Our attention turns to the woman, whose nature had been transformed. With swift feet she hurries back to the city to bear witness. Her relationship to men is changed. They look at her with incredulous astonishment. They follow her with eagerness. In the ordinary way there would have been a long time between seed-sowing and harvest, but now a harvest is reaped in a day. Men who came out of curiosity because of what a changed woman had said, themselves began to testify of an experience born in their own souls. Their testimony was to the universality of the power which had changed their lives.

On verses 43-54 McClymont says: "Passing into Galilee, Jesus is received with honor by his own countrymen owing to the reputation derived from his miracles in Jerusalem, a craving for 'signs and wonders' being characteristic of the Galileans as of the Jews in general. The real value of a miracle as an aid to faith is illustrated by the case of the nobleman of Capernaum, whose son is healed by a word spoken by Jesus at Cana of Galilee, this being the second miracle performed by him there, on his second return to Galilee."

O God, we are amazed at thy power to win the most unlikely! Thou dost gather sheaves from fields we imagined to be barren. In heathen lands thy praises are being sung. Open our eyes to see the signs of the times! Teach us their meaning! In Christ's name. Amen.

Wednesday, 18th. John 5. 1-15.

It is probable that this incident took place at the feast of Pentecost, that is, in the month of May. Jesus is back in Jerusalem.

McClymont says: "The pool has been identified by the agents of the Palestine Exploration Society. It was known to the Crusaders, as is evident from the church they built over it with a crypt after the pattern of the porches, and a representation of the angel troubling the waters on the wall of the crypt. The pool is 55 feet long, and was enclosed with porches for the convenience of those frequenting it, like the medicinal baths at Tiberias. We cannot infer from the present tense that the building was standing at the time this Gospel was written: the author merely describes what had been a familiar object to him when he used to dwell in Jerusalem."

The nature of the disease is not specified. It rendered him helpless. It may have been infantile paralysis. Anyway it was a notorious case, and the action of Jesus was a spontaneous expression of pity. Evidently the man had ceased to try to help himself. Something drew him to the spot, but he had tried so often to reach the healing waters and had failed to be in time that he was now but a spectator without a hope left in him. The question of Jesus was therefore startling in its directness, and threw the man into confusion. Jesus now challenges him to self-effort, and with such imperiousness of tone that the man rises, folds his bed, and walks.

At once Jesus is involved in controversy. The healed man is a lawbreaker because he carries his bed. Jesus is guilty because he works a cure and because he instigates this man to break the law. On his reply Brooke says, "He is doing the will of the Lawgiver. It is the Father who works when his messenger works. This claim to be a fellow-worker with God seems blasphemous to his opponents, and they seek his death."

O Lord, thou art our helper! When we despair of ourselves, thou challengest us to effort; when we have waited for some man to help us to life's blessing, thou discoverest for us inner capacity such as we dreamed not of. Teach us how to live! Make us whole, we beseech thee! Amen.

Thursday, 19th. John 5. 16-47.

Jesus finds himself involved in a charge of blasphemy. McClymont says of verse

17, "Jesus here claims for his conduct a far higher character than his accusers had even dreamed of, as an act of positive obedience to the law of perpetual action in the divine kingdom, illustrated by his work of mercy on the sabbath day, even as it was illustrated by his Father's continual work of providence and redemption since he had finished his work of creation and entered on his period of sabbath rest. In other words, he claims that such rest does not arise from inaction, but from action of the highest and most beneficial kind." Verses 19-30 expound this thought. The Son is but following the example of the Father. Greater things are in process of manifestation, things which will astonish men and constrain them to believe. They shall see the will of the Father expressing itself in the quickening of the spiritually dead. In that hour men will decide their own destiny by their attitude toward this spiritual quickening. Acceptance of the Son and his message will bring eternal life. The hour of momentous issue is soon to strike. In the Son reposes quickening power, and from him issues judgment.

On verses 41-47 Brooke says: "This summary suggests that Jesus' opponents had accused him of self-glorification. In answer he traces back their failure to accept his message to want of that love of God which their study of Scripture should have taught them. If a false prophet were to come on his own authority and speak presumptuously in God's name, flattering their pride and self-seeking, such an one they would welcome. Belief was impossible so long as they looked for praise of men, and not of God. As with judgment, so with accusation. It was not his primary object. Their real accuser is Moses, whose law they believe themselves to obey so well. They failed to recognize the Prophet whom he foretold, and so they fail to see the truth of Jesus' words."

Almighty Father, may we see thee in thy Son! Teach us to seek the truth! Restrain us from all that is artificial and accidental! May we examine the spirit of things and of men to see if it be of God: then may we honor it! Amen.

Friday, 20th. John 6. 1-21.

Scholars have found difficulty in the arrangement of the incidents in John's Gospel. They suggest that chapter 6 should follow chapter 4, and that 5 and 7 should be read together. The sequence would be more natural if this were done, as otherwise Jesus would be traveling to and fro with great rapidity, and it would be difficult to fit in the narrative with those of the Synoptists. However, our object here is not critical, but interpretive.

The feeding of the 5000 is recorded in all four Gospels. Each narrative has a

touch of its own. Here we see Andrew and Philip playing a part, and calling attention to a lad who had brought food with him. The bread was the cheapest and coarsest in use suggesting that the lad came from a poor home. We have dealt with various aspects of the incident before, but now we would emphasize the significance of the wish to make Jesus king.

Headlem says: "It is this that gives a meaning to the whole narrative. To lead a multitude into a wilderness would be the natural prelude to an attempt at rebellion, and the assertion of claims to be king of Israel. It was what Theudas at a later date attempted, when he promised that the waters of the Jordan would divide to allow the multitude that he led to pass over. It was, as we learn from the Acts of the Apostles, what the Egyptian did when he collected a crowd in the wilderness to march with them to the Mount of Olives. Jesus had no such purpose, but here were the crowds collected together on the edge of the mountains. Could he not now be persuaded to declare himself the Messiah, to take his place at the head of the multitudes who would have readily followed him, and march with them to Jerusalem and seize the kingdom? This was a natural desire of the people. It was equally obvious that it was inconsistent with the whole of Jesus' purpose. He did not wish them to raise a rebellion in the desert. It was not an earthly kingdom that he desired. The time would come when he must assert himself as Messiah, but not in this way. Meanwhile . . . his disciples must learn some way to keep free from all these worldly complications, and yet recognize his Messianic office. . . . The result as regards the enthusiasm of his followers was that it was for a time checked. Jesus had disappointed them. He had spoken of a kingdom, but when he was offered it by a great body of enthusiastic, even fanatical, Galileans, who as little on this occasion as on any other thought of consequences, he refused. So people began to lose faith in him."

Our God, use our resources, we beseech thee! They are poor indeed, but they may be transformed through thy power. All that we have we offer, and we pray that it may be used for the blessing of needy souls, and to bring glory to thy name. Amen.

Saturday, 21st. John 6. 22-40.

The difficulty with which Jesus had to contend was the materialistic mind of his auditors. Their lives fed on the mundane. If they would know life after the diviner sort, they must feed on heavenly food. If they wish to know what they must do, the answer is direct. First, believe in the messenger sent by God. But to this they reply, When they would crown him Messiah he

refused. By what token may they recognize him? It had been said that the Messiah would give the manna from heaven: what is his sign? Jesus replies that such manna is the gift of God, and the Son is himself that manna.

Such language is a little difficult to us, but it was not difficult to those for whom this Gospel was written. Philo said, "He calleth the divine word, eldest of things which are, manna." The failure of the people would arise from unbelief. Doubt cheats them out of the gift of God. The relationship which is essential to life is dependent on an attitude of soul. Believe on the Son, and he will create the consciousness of eternal life.

Grieve says: Jesus "reproaches his hearers with having failed to exercise the faith in him which their knowledge of him warranted, and explains their failure, not as due to any unfaithfulness on his part to his calling, but as proving that they had not experienced this inward change. We may here note a contrast between Jesus' standpoint and ours. We lay stress on the subjective process in man of unbelief or faith, he lays stress on the objective purpose of God. For him the inward change is a divine gift. But we should misrepresent his mind if we considered that there was anything arbitrary in the exercise of the divine will or any disregard of the exercise of the human will, for verse 40 makes this plain. God gives to Christ all who choose to know him and trust in him. On an intelligent interpretation there is in this teaching no moral realism or fatalism, as though God doomed any man to inevitable unbelief, and so to consequent damnation."

Our Father, we seek the Bread of heaven, eating of which we shall never die! Deliver us from doubt and fear! Unless thou dost visit us with heavenly grace we can never know the abundant life. Help us, we beseech thee! Amen.

Sunday, 22nd. John 6. 41-65.

This is evidently a difficult scene in which the same problem is discussed in its essential features. In place of the multitudes we see the "Jews," a term indicating a group of representative leaders either from the local synagogues or from Jerusalem. They seem to have been acquainted with the family of Jesus. They did not know of anything miraculous about his birth, and so assumed that he was like the other members of his family. His lowly origin was a stumbling block to the recognition of his Messiahship. Jesus replies that they must look deeper. The spirit of a man is the test of his greatness. Such a judgment as they express is an index to their spiritual unfitness.

Jesus then reiterates the truth that the key to eternal life lies in faith in God's messenger. McClymont says, "Resuming his allegorical teaching regarding himself as the Bread of life, he contrasts the lifeless manna, which could only yield their fathers a temporary benefit and had no power to save them from death, with his own life-giving power as the living bread, the living source in his own person (and not merely the means of bestowing an outward gift as Moses had been,) of a divine nourishment that would save the soul from death by imparting to it a principle of spiritual and eternal life. This was implied in what he had already said, but he now introduces a fresh thought by declaring that the bread that he will give is his flesh, which he will give for the life of the world." The reference to his flesh "is clearly a reference to his sacrificial death." The true life can be gained only by the assimilation of the "body" and "blood," the life set free by death for wider purposes. Those who partake of this "true" food gain abiding union with Christ.

It is impossible for me to enter into a discussion of the precise meaning of "flesh." I think it implies the whole of our human nature, our desires and affections in so far as they are associated with our fleshly or material nature. But there is possibly a higher meaning still. Headlam is one of our greatest living scholars, and he says, "Flesh and blood represent the material elements out of which a man is made, and so the flesh may be used for the personality: 'They twain shall be one flesh' (Matthew 19.6). It is contrasted with spirit, 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak' (Matthew 26.41; Mark 14.38). 'It is the spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing' (John 6.63). But it is characteristic of the absence of anything like dualism in the use of the term, or in the conception of the human personality, that spiritual communion with our Lord should be described as eating his flesh and drinking his blood."

Our Lord, may we know the power of thy cross! Through its virtue may we be delivered from sin and quickened into virtue! May we live in abiding union with our Master! Give us a deepening consciousness that we are the children of God! Amen.

Monday, 23rd. John 7.1-24.

The brethren of Jesus are in perplexity. They share the popular feeling. If he were really the Messiah, why did he resist the effort to declare him such? And now, if his claim is well founded, why does he remain in remote and obscure regions? The proper place for the Messiah is Jerusalem, and the proper hour is a great national festival. Jesus saw that to follow

such counsel would be to court martyrdom. He has already tested the attitude of mind of the rulers. They are hostile, and prepared to destroy him. His times are in God's hands. His life is regulated by intimate acquaintance with the Father's will. So he urges them to go forward. Later, and doubtless in answer to prayer he feels that it is the Father's will that he should go and that the journey can be made with safety. It is obvious that had he acted on his brothers' advice he would have been arrested. Not finding him, the authorities were off their guard, and he made the journey. Later they were ready to kill him, but he escaped.

On his arrival in the Temple he begins to teach, and astonishes the authorities by his power. How could an untrained man show such knowledge and power? Brooke says of the answer of Jesus, "He replies that his teaching has a higher source, as all will recognize who are willing to obey God's will. The self-sent teacher will betray himself by the selfishness of his aims. Their judgment should be based on something deeper than the mere appearance of law-breaking."

The great danger besetting each of us is to look only at the surface. Hence we form snap judgments which are usually wrong. We should train ourselves to look into the heart of things.

Almighty God, may we hear and obey thee this day! Grant that we may hearken to thy call and serve thee in truth! May we not be judged cowards, and may we be ready and alert in the moment when thou dost challenge us! In Christ's name. Amen.

Tuesday, 24th. John 7.25-52.

The courage of Jesus impressed many. He seems to have no fear as he comes and goes and does his work as teacher. Can it be the rulers really know him to be the Christ? Then the old difficulty recurs: they remember his lowly origin. Such an attitude of mind roused Jesus to indignation. His raised voice revealed the intensity of his emotion. Know him, because they know his family? How could they ever know anything while governed by such a principle? He says, "I am here as a man who has been sent." The words and works which they witness are testimony to him who is the director and energizer of Jesus.

On the word "true" Watkins says: "It is almost impossible to give the meaning of the original except in paraphrase. We must keep, therefore, the ordinary rendering, but bear in mind that it does not mean, 'He that sent me is truthful,' but 'He that sent me is the ideally true One.' You talk of person and of origin, of knowing me and from whence I came, but all this is knowledge of the senses, and in the region of

the phenomenal world. Being is only truly known in relation to the eternal being. He that sent me to manifest his being in the world is the truly existent One. In him is my true origin, and him ye know not."

Jesus has made a profound impression upon the crowd, and the Pharisees found themselves frustrated in their plot. Throughout the Feast of the Tabernacles Jesus carried on his work, and on the eighth day uttered his challenge to thirsty souls. He has within himself the power to satisfy individual craving for life. All who were aware of spiritual need might find in him satisfaction. In verse 38 we find the "fuller truth that every one in living communion with Christ becomes himself the center of spiritual influence. There is in him a power of life, which, when quickened by faith, flows forth as a river, carrying life and refreshment to others. No spirit grasps a great truth which satisfies its own yearnings, as the water of the fountain slakes physical thirst, without longing to send it forth to others who are seeking what he himself had sought. There is in him a river whose waters no barrier can confine. This is the spirit of the prophet and the evangelist, of the martyr and the missionary. It is the spirit of every great teacher. It is the link which binds men together, and makes the life of every Christian approach the life of Christ, for he lives not for himself, but for the world."

O God, we thirst for thee, our souls cry out for thee! Satisfy our longings, we beseech thee! Help us to find our lives in Christ, and through his grace to give to others what we have found in him! In his name. Amen.

Wednesday, 25th. John 7. 53 to 8. 11.

This story is omitted by the best manuscripts. The Revised Version puts it in brackets. There is no reason to believe that it does not narrate a true incident in the life of our Lord.

The action of the authorities does not indicate a genuine indignation against the sin with which they charged the woman. Their object was to tempt Jesus. The Roman courts would not tolerate the crime which they proposed committing. If Jesus supported them, he would be openly at variance with Rome. If he were against their act, he would be at variance with Mosaic law. Jesus was indignant. His act in stooping and writing on the ground was intended to show them that the whole business was offensive to him, and he did not wish to hear anything further.

Dods says that in the answer of Jesus, "as the searcher of hearts, as he who knew what was in men, he could risk the woman's life on the chance of there being a single man of them who was really as shocked as he pretended to be, who was pre-

pared to say he had in his own soul no taint of the sin he was loudly professing his abhorrence of, who was prepared to say, Death is due to this sin, and then accept such proportionate punishment as would fall to his own share." "This searching purity, this stainless mirror, the woman felt it more difficult to face than the accusing scribes. Alone with him who had so easily unmasked their wickedness, she feels that now she has to do with something much more awful than the accusations of men, the actual irrevocable sin. Now that others are silent her own conscience speaks. Now that her accusers are silenced, she must listen to him whose purity has saved her."

Saviour of men, we rejoice in the compassion which throws a mantle about us when we stand exposed to the censure of men! We praise thee for thy patience with us when we are convicted of sin. Help us to turn from sin to holiness! Amen.

Thursday, 26th. John 8. 12-20.

If the preceding story has been interpolated, this passage follows on the offer of Jesus to quench the thirst of human souls. He is also the light of the world and source of spiritual illumination. This claim is immediately resented by the Pharisees. They say he is bearing witness to himself. He replies that his self-consciousness is no greater than his God-consciousness. He has come on a divine errand and lives in the enjoyment of divine companionship. The words and works which they have witnessed are the Father's attestation of the Son's character and claims. They are ignorant and incapable of seeing either himself in his essential nature or the Father who is working in him and through him.

F. B. Meyer says: "Light is essential to life. Without light flowers would be colorless, even if they grew, animate and inanimate creation would fail, and the world would hasten back to primeval chaos, out of which light came. And equally necessary is it for the inner life to be sustained and nourished by communion with and obedience to the Lord Jesus. Apart from him it is doomed to wither. In him, through him and by him alone, can it thrive. There is no doubt about this. Begin even now to believe in and follow him, though it may involve death and the grave, yet as surely as the soul follows him, acting up to all its present convictions of duty, it will emerge into a clearness of vision and a vigor of life which shall vindicate its choice forever. Let Jesus be your pillar of cloud and fire!"

Our Master, the radiancy of love which emanates from thee has filled the earth! Through all the tracks of time we see thy gracious shining. Help us to walk in the light this day! Amen.

Friday, 27th. John 8. 21-59.

Dod says: "John has now briefly detailed the self-manifestations of Jesus which he considered sufficient to induce the Jews to believe in him, and he has shown us how, both in Galilee and Jerusalem, the people with few exceptions remained unconvinced. He has also very clearly shown the reason for his rejection in Galilee. The reason was that the blessings he proposed to bestow were spiritual, while the blessings they craved were physical. Their Messianic expectation was not satisfied in him. So long as he healed their sick, and by his mere will furnished famished thousands with food, they thought, This is the king for us: but when he told them these things were mere signs of higher blessings, and when he urged them to seek these spiritual gifts, they left him in a body. In Jerusalem opinion has followed a similar course. There also Jesus has exemplified his power to impart life. . . . In this chapter John traces the course of popular opinion from a somewhat hopeful perplexity to a furious hostility that at length, for the first time, broke out in actual violence. Jesus did not indeed immediately retire, as if further efforts to induce faith were useless, but when the storm broke out a second time he finally withdrew, and taught only such as sought him out."

Jesus is under no illusions. He knows that his hour is rapidly approaching. The Jews will wake up when it is too late. The situation is hopeless. Nothing can conquer their stubborn blindness. He has reiterated his testimony, but it has not penetrated their consciousness. He has so much to say, but he is speaking to closed minds. Not until their blindness leads them to attempt his destruction will they awake to his real nature and mission. Many are convinced, and these he attempts to help. If they will make his teaching an essential part of life, they will be set free in soul. But they resent the idea of being in bondage. He says that sin is bondage, and that to be free from it demands that they disassociate themselves from all former alignments and accept him as their Master. His enemies become furious. They refuse to believe in him or his message. And their refusal shows that they are not of God. Jesus then goes on to assert his true origin, that he existed before Abraham. Thus he claims a preëxistence which makes their hostility into treason against the divine and their denunciation into blasphemies.

Give us holy boldness, O Lord! May thy cause challenge our heroism! In these difficult times help us to bear witness to thy salvation! Let its power demonstrate itself in our lives! Amen.

Saturday, 28th. John 9. 1-12.

This story has an interest of its own, and also is important because it throws light

on the age-old problem of sin and suffering dealt with in Job and elsewhere. It shows us the Light of the world in his contest with the unfortunate.

Jesus seems to be escaping from the angry crowd who were ready to murder him. On his way out he sees an object to arouse his compassion, and at once proceeds with the work the Father had given him to do. The poor man had never seen the light of day. The disciples notice the manner in which Jesus was regarding the man, and taking in the situation propounded their question. It was an oft debated problem. Scholars and common folk were alike perplexed by it, if this is a God-governed world. Watkins puts the problem of the disciples in this form:

"The problem is, Was the sin that of the man himself, or that of his parents? The latter alternative is familiar to us, and daily experience shows us that within limits it holds good in both the moral and physical worlds. It was clearly taught in the second commandment, and there is abundant evidence that the belief was at this time widely spread. We have greater difficulty in tracing the origin of the former alternative. That a more or less definite belief in the transmigration of souls was common among Jews at the time of our Lord's ministry is made probable by references in Philo and Josephus. We know it was a doctrine of the Essenes and the Cabbala. . . . It was, therefore, probably with some thought that the life in this maimed body may not have been the first stage of his existence that they ask, Did this man sin?"

Jesus is intolerant of such questions in the presence of human need. Blindness is not a subject for such discussion. Human suffering was the intolerable thing. In the presence of suffering humanity God's power is challenged. Suffering is a challenge to a God-filled man to express the resources with which he has been endowed. The hours available for the Son of God were limited: in them he must work the works of him who sent him. The Light of the world is not merely operative in the spiritual sphere.

The miracle was wrought through a combination of material resources and spiritual power. The use of saliva and clay on the eyes was part of the therapeutics of the time of which we have abundant evidence. When Jesus fed the 5000 he used all the material resources available. So here saliva, clay, the waters of Siloam were agencies of a curative process, but over and above them was the power of God.

Our Father, make us wise! Teach us how to use the remedial powers in life, but teach us especially thy power and willingness to help! Deliver us from foolish questioning! Help us to live lives of practical usefulness! Amen.